KALĀ

Journal of Indian Art History Congress

Editors

Maruti Nandan Tiwari
Kamal Giri

C. S. S.

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Volume VI : 1999-2000

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Dr. Maruti Nandan Tiwari **Dr. Kamal Giri**

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Back -	Standing image of emperor Ashoka, China, Sandstone. Courtesy : Catalogue of exhibition on Chinese Civilization held in Tokyo, August 2000.

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EDITORIAL

The study of art in any country is conditioned by the availability of vestiges in the form of architecture, sculpture, painting, terracotta and various performing arts and also the outlook and approach towards art. The approach may differ from place to place but the study of art in any country will bring forth the cultural heritage and legacy in concrete visual forms including its living multifaceted manifestations. In India it has been more close to the heart than head and hence its psychological appeal and social impact have been immense and heart touching. However, the study of Indian art is going to face serious problem in future in terms of the availability of persons/scholars for the study of plethora of many unknown, unpublished, unrevealed aspects of Indian art. We must at this juncture be bold enough to admit that indeed we all are doing our best in the field of Indian art for its multi-dimensional study and also to great extent for bringing this heritage to the people. But at the same time we are not that much concerned towards the incoming young scholars who are becoming disinclined towards further study of Indian art or Art History for the want of professional avenues. The Art Historians should seriously address themselves to this genuine problem.

The present volume of KALĀ has 27 research articles along with three book reviews which deal with different problems and concepts of Indian Art. The areas covered by these articles are very extensive which include architecture, iconography, painting, sculpture, numismatics and also performing art. The articles pertain to both the unpublished materials and fresh interpretations covering almost the pan-Indian canvas. The period of study in the volume ranges from the earliest times to the present day to understand and underline the continuity of various are traditions.

There are three problem oriented papers of which one probes into the bearing of politics on art in reference to Maurya, Kushan and Gupta empires. The other two papers are related with choreography in terms of the visual expression of India's cultural heritage and the explanation of different myths and motifs of Indian temple architecture. Three articles (nos. 2, 3, 5) discuss the iconography of some of the rare forms of Brahmā, Āditya, and Śiva-Sūrya-Ardhanārī. One article however discusses the important iconographic data culled from *Vāyu-purāṇa*. A few articles (nos. 11-15) make detailed study of both the problems of identification and the iconographic features of the Viśvarūpa-Viṣṇu images from Gujarat and Dvādaśāditya, Sapta-Mātṛkā and Siṁhanāda Lokeśvara figures from different places.

The articles on architecture cover some of the remote and so far unexplored areas which pertain to the architectural originality in Punjab and Post-Gupta temples of Uttrānchala Himalyas and North Vindhyas. An article on aesthetic implications of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* makes an interesting study of various components and themes in the *raṅgamaṇḍapas* of the temples. All the discussion is based on the notion that every bit of architecture of iconography or even sculptural representation has specific meaning and purpose which are to be understood in the background of the tradition as well as architectural context. A few articles take care of terracotta art tradition of south India from past to present in all its dimensions, the numismatic art of Kerala making an overview, Sadāśiva sculptures from Bengal and the importance of the land grants in the study of Indian paintings. An important area of Banaras Brocades also finds place in the volume.

We are happy to bring the VIth volume of KALĀ to the scholars, students and all those who are keen to know about their cultural heritage. The publication of KALĀ has been regular only because of the generous help of the scholars. The editors are indeed grateful to all the scholars for their contributions. We also offer our heartfelt thanks to the Chairman Dr. M.L. Nigam and General Secretary Dr. R.D. Choudhury for their ungrudging help and encouragement. Out thanks are due also to Sundeep Prakashan, New Delhi for bringing out the volume nicely and timely.

— MARTI NANDAN TIWARI

KAMAL GIRI

Vijayadashami

7 October, 2000

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POLITICS AND ART IN THE THREE EMPIRES OF ANCIENT INDIA*

Prof. A.K. Narain

At first sight the combination of politics and art seems peculiar. But it is no more peculiar than Politics and clothes, which one day the Smothers' Brothers entertainingly discussed on TV in a programme "Get Clothes Bright" sponsored by the Bold, or "Food and Love", which was the topic for a Sunday sermon at the University Presbyterian Church in Madison. Now, although you may look in vain for the occurrence of even the word 'politics' in the literature dealing with art in ancient India it is difficult to deny direct and indirect relationship between the two. Questions do crop up one after another, but there is dearth of sufficient material to pursue the subject effectively.

If we have to think of politics and art today, what questions would we ask? We might ask to what extent the government and its policies affect the growth and production of art. We might ask to what extent artists reflect the opinion of the government, whether to approve or reject? To what extent the government, by providing facilities and better economic and working conditions, is helping the artist to express freely, or to what extent does it imply that they actually are buying the artist by ensuring better communication and exchange opportunities enabling the artist to acquaint himself with foreign works and techniques. Some examples of recent past in USA can also become part of such an investigation, e.g. President Johnson asking an artist to do his portrait for the White House and then rejecting it because he did not find his image, correctly portrayed or, to his taste; a certain artist depicting sex symbols in a particular style and winning an award on it but failing to find a place for it in the art gallery (the same jury withheld it from the exhibition thinking it not fit for general consumption).

In India, before independence, art historians like Havell and Coomaraswamy wrote about Swadeshi and national idealism, and artists in Bengal contributed to the nationalist movement by reviving old cultural values. Havell was bitter about the official suppression of Indian craftsmanship and wrote "Indian art cries for bread; we give it museums, exhibitions and archaeology." After independence, Lalit Kala Akademi was founded by the Indian government to promote and encourage study and research of art, to co-ordinate the activities of various regional schools of art, to help institutions and individuals with financial assistance, to organize exhibitions and so on. In one of the reports of National exhibition of art sponsored by the Lalit Kala Akademi the judges remarked "that the impact of the various trends of modern world art on the sensibilities of our artists has not led to a proper synthesis between the surviving ideas and techniques of our country with those foreign techniques which are significant for us and which could be assimilated without exposing our artists to the charge of imitationism.. further that, the traditional styles seemed to have received a shock from the virtuousity of foreign achievement". But then we have also the fact of bringing Crobusier to build Chandigarh, a new state capital after independence. Then there are certain general political philosophies of world importance now, as for example Marxism which affect art irrespective of national boundaries. With the growth of democracy and the importance of the individual, an artist now occupies a much different position and plays a much different role in modern times *vis a vis* politics. But this was not so in ancient times when all artists were in fact artisans and politics did not enjoy the wider meaning as the total complex of man's relation in society as it does now. It is equated with the state.

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* The article is a verbatim reproduction of the text of one of several lectures delivered by Prof. A.K. Narain in 1967 at the University of Chicago, USA. The article hence is without footnotes, bibliographical references and illustrations - *Editors*.

For our subject, i.e. politics and art in the three empires of ancient India, by politics we mean government, and by government the king, the governors or *satraps* and the whole hierarchy of officers against the background of early Indian political philosophy. By art, we mean mostly sculptures. We may refer to artistic expressions of experiments on coins and, if and where necessary, on terracottas and paintings. We must note also that the craftsmen in ancient India had their own guilds with their own laws and customs. It appears that in the beginning these guilds were fairly independent but later with growing centralization of administration the king examined and established the laws of the guilds. Also artisans, of lower castes, and therefore more given to royal obedience, were regarded as being in a special manner devoted to the royal service, and capital punishment was inflicted on any person who impaired efficiency of a craftsman by causing the loss of a hand or an eye. The sculptor or artisan who could translate the ideas of the king into an object of art was rewarded, and the finer the production richer the reward, and the anonymous sculptor might even become the master artist of his time as Ānanda of Sāñchī.

It is interesting to note that the fourth book on the suppression of criminals (*Kanṭakaśodhana*) in Kauṭilya *Arthaśāstra* opens with the chapter on "keeping a watch over artisans" because artisans and craftsmen were liable to cheat the public as the traders and so they were regarded as thorns (*Kanṭaka*) in the body politic. Perhaps the guilds did not enjoy the confidence of Mauryan imperial administration as they did in the Gupta times. In the second chapter of the same book, Kautilya advises, "for artisans, who by conspiring together bring about a deterioration in the quality of the work, or (increase in) profit, or a hindrance to purchase or sale, the fine is one thousand *paṇas*". And it is interesting to know that the salary of the artisan in the royal household was only 120 *paṇas*, i.e. 6 pounds annually as against 500 to 1000 *paṇas* i.e. 25 to 50 pounds for the sorcerer, attendants, playmates, trumpetblower etc. Of course the artists were exempted from taxation.

Politics and Art in the three Empires of Ancient India

For our analysis of art we are concerned with the three empires of ancient India. The first empire was that of the Mauryas who ruled from c. 322 to 184 B.C. The second was that of the Kushanas who ruled from about the beginning of the first century to the middle of the third century A.D. The third was that of the Guptas, who came to real power in the first quarter of the fourth century A.D. and flourished until the third quarter of the sixth century A.D. In terms of political geography, the Mauryas ruled west to east, from Herat to Bengal, and north to south, from Kashmir to Mysore, one of the largest empire history has ever witnessed. The Kushanas during the time of Kanishka ruled west to east from Khwarizm to Bihar and from beyond the Pamirs in the north to the Vindhyas in the south. The Guptas governed the whole of the northern India directly and some areas outlying it indirectly, but culturally their sphere of influence was much wider. Thus in terms of time and space the Mauryan empire was the most extensive but the shortest lived and that of the Guptas was the least extensive but the longest lived. Ethnographically the Mauryan and the Kushan covered more diverse peoples and lands than the Gupta. Whereas most of the Mauryan and Kushan kings, including the most powerful among them, patronized Buddhism, the Gupta kings were mostly followers of Brahmanical sects. It is however significant to note that none of these dynasties were sectarians in outlook.

Mauryan polity was very centralized, Kushan was decentralized and hierarchical, Gupta was not so centralized and was liberal, and the feudatorical beginnings can be traced to it. The Maurya and Gupta kings were of indigenous origin but the Kushans were aliens. All the three empires had good contacts with areas, governments and people outside their own. All these three empires were preceded by a period of small kingdoms and they broke up on account of internal operation of centrifugal tendencies and foreign invasions.

All the three empires witnessed great periods of artistic activity. In fact the idea of imperial power and consolidation loom so large over these activities that the art of these periods are given dynastic appellations like Mauryan, Kushan or Gupta art. The art historians of India have not yet developed art history periodization independently like archaic, early, classical, rococo, baroque etc. In fact this shows how strong the hold of "politics" was on the art of ancient India. But this is the case with most ancient civilizations.

It is an old saying that while civilization as a whole progresses with time, in art however the theory of cyclic evolution is still controversial. Practically useful knowledge is not likely to be forgotten, especially once writing exists to hand it along. Inventions are rarely lost altogether, even if their use may be abandoned through lack of resources. It has been remarked that, whole part of civilization which is concerned with survival and subsistence and welfare and progress must in its nature face reality. Means once achieved are accordingly likely to be retained and added to. So the general course of this practical component of civilization is cumulative. But the fine arts face values, not reality, do not grow cumulatively; atleast they have not generally grown cumulatively through their recorded history. So they come in intermittent spurts instead of going on continuously. It is not too clear what determines where their development stops, except that it seems to be the point at which the values, or ideals, that are shaped as the art grows have been attained by the artist's; execution, and therewith are exhausted. Unless the goals can now be set farther ahead or widened, or new ones found, and the style be reconstituted on a new basis, there is nothing left for its practitioners but maintenance of the status reached; which is in its nature incompatible with the play of creative activity. In other words styles are produced by forces that are inherently dynamic. Politics and economic conditions play a significant role in the intermittent spurting of styles.

Now if we survey Indian art, by which I mean sculptures, from the Indus valley to Gupta times, we note that there are certain features which run all through and there are others which spurt up only intermittently. If you take such examples as the male torso and the Brahmi Bull of the Indus valley, the Rāmpurvā bull and the yakṣas of the Mauryan period, Mathura and Sarnath Bodhisattvas, and through them the Buddha statues of the Kushan and Gupta times, the Indian art development seem continuous. But if we take such examples as the Sarnath lion capital of Aśoka, the various gods and goddesses on the Śaka-Pahlava and Kushana coins, the early examples and experiments of Gandhara art we find that they come and go and we cannot help noting certain remarkable features which speak not only of foreign inspiration but also of technique, not only royal direction but also political control of social and economic systems. In short, the remarkable features of the Maurya and Kushana art could not have come into existence but for the role of politics. The case is different when you think of the Gupta period by which time the Indian genius had so assimilated whatever it thought necessary to assimilate that the role of king or politics became superfluous, a point which I shall have the opportunity to restate later.

The polish and sophistication of the lion capital vanish with the death of Aśoka and the Kushana eclecticism and experiments once absorbed by the people who made India their home led to the development of Gandhara art in the western part of the Kushan empire and its variations in certain regions, or Eastern part, where it completely identified with the ideals of the people. A king may introduce a style but its continuity is guaranteed only if it becomes the real property of the people. In this respect Aśokan art failed as perhaps the Aśokan *Dhamma*.

Now coming to the Mauryan art and the role of Aśoka, we cannot afford to forget two things. Firstly that, after a mature period of artistic activity in the Indus valley civilization, hardly anything of art except the oft quoted gold plaque from the Lauriyā mound has survived for the intervening period of about two thousand years until we come to Aśokan times. Perhaps the Indus art style died once it reached its realization or exhaustion point, i.e., realization of its ideals, exhaustion of its potentialities. It revived again when the second urban revolution begins with the rise of Magadha as an imperial power. In a way, from the point of view of material culture, the intervening Vedic period is a period of regression after the Indus civilization. Secondly that, it was during the Mauryan times that wood was replaced by stone for architectural purposes and perhaps for other art-productions. This revolution could not have been possible but for royal initiative and gearing of governmental machinery. The very fact that all the pillars were carved out from Chunar sandstone and sent to various parts of the empire shows the active participation of the government. What a difficult job it must have been, you can realize only from the account we have of the shifting of the pillars to Delhi in the time of Firuz Shah Tughlaq, about seventeen hundred years after Aśoka. We are told by contemporary historian Shams-i-Siraj that a carriage with 42 wheels was made and a rope was attached to each wheel. 200 men pulled at each of these ropes. Thus 8400 men were required to move the carriage with only one pillar from Topra near Ambala in Punjab and was brought to the banks of Jamuna where king Firuz himself came to meet it and supervised the work.

It has been rightly said that nowhere do we find a clearer picture of the true character of Mauryan civilization than in its sculpture; the surviving monuments reveal the same imperialistic and autocratic character as Aśoka's rule in its essential structure, the same identification of personality and cause as is with the *Dhamma*, the same mission of *Dhammavijaya* and the fulfilment of the Buddhist ideal of *Chakravarti Dhārmika Dharma Mahārāja*. Unfortunately art historians have spent more time discussing the existence or non-existence of foreign influence on Mauryan art than pointing the more relevant aspects of it in relation to society, economy and polity.

It is not without significance that most specimens of what is known as the royal art are associated with the pillar edicts of Aśoka and they are the results of a policy pursued by Aśoka following the devastating war of Kalinga and his conversion to Buddhism. And what are these edicts? They are statements made by Aśoka concerning his remorse on Kalinga war, stages of his conversion, or devotion, to Buddhism, his understanding of the *Dhamma*, his earnest desire to improve the morals of his people and his directions in this regard, his administrative measures to introduce uniformity of justice and punishment, his stern warning against rebellion and his success of *Dhammavijaya* idea extending as far west as the Mediterranean. The pillar edicts are in the nature of royal orders, at least they smack of more authority and gratification in achievement than the rock edicts. It is significant that right at the place where the Buddha gave his first sermon, Aśoka chose to play the most authoritarian role over the *Saṁgha* and declared that those guilty of creating schism in the *Saṁgha* will be given white robes and expelled out of the *Saṁgha*. As if to boost his imperious command it was necessary to crown the Sarnath pillar containing this edict by the most regal and imperial symbolism. The symbolism of the lion capital is controversial no doubt. There are various theories, but some art historians have rightly pointed out its link with the royal investiture ceremony which persists even to the modern times in a Buddhist Country like Thailand. To quote Rowland, "The turning of the wheel is one of the powers inherent in the early Indian concept ot the universal ruler or *Cakravartin* assumed by the Buddha; the Sarnath column may be interpreted, therefore, as not only a glorification of the Buddha's preaching, symbolized by the crowning wheel, but also through the cosmological implications of the whole pillar, as a symbol of the universal extension of the power of the Buddha's law... and simultaneously an emblem of the universal extension of Mauryan imperialism through the Dharma". Thus it may well be taken as Aśoka's fulfilment of the ideal of *Chakravartin* or the Dhārmika *Dharmarāja*, who made the *Siṁhanāda*, the lions roar, of his *Dhammavijaya* to the four quarters. The great wheel supported by the lions had thirty two spokes denoting the 32 *mahāpuruṣa lakṣaṇas* which are the same for the Buddha and the *Chakravarti* king.

It may be noted here that of the four animals, horse, elephant, lion and bull on the abcus, only two, horse and elephant, are definitely connected with Buddha's life and Buddhism as is clear from all aniconic representations of the Buddha in Bharhut and Sāñchī. Nowhere the Buddha is represented by a lion or a bull; therefore there is no reason to connect these two animals with the life of the Buddha. These are animals *par excellence* denoting majesty and strength and both are royal or imperial characteristics.

How is it, that Aśoka with all the resources he had, could not think, or plan execution, of art production without the association of his pillars which were nothing more than materials for royal documents about himself and his *Dhamma*. Even the solitary elephant of Dhaulī is more as a guide to the locale of his inscription than an independent object in itself. The elephant was not even redeemed from its rocky bindings. How could he be? His job was to stand there in obedience and not to glorify in freedom from stone which it could have, had it been in round.

In my opinion therefore the role of politics in the production of the lion capital, and perhaps other capitals, is very intimate both in theme and execution. If some art historians have called them as examples of "royal art" this only confirms our analysis in all its implications.

But, all art in the Mauryan period was not royal. We have fortunately some specimens of what is called popular by some, folk art by others, but may rightly be called people's art. The representative specimens of this art are *yakṣa* statues. This is not the work of royal artisans, or of artisans under orders of the king emperor, but the work of an artist free to express himself. The result is that it is neither bound by the stony Dhaulī elephant nor has it the sophistication and polish born of royal patronage and protection of the Sarnath lion capital. It is a figure in round, a great mass of stone as if courageously liberated to produce a symbol of power and protection for the people at large, and that is what the *yakṣas* were meant to be. This power and protection for the people was not imposed by a king emperor but by the people themselves and they created its embodiment in superhuman size. Its unsophisticated beauty, rugged strength and honesty and above all benign expression marks the beginning of the Indian tradition which passing through various intermediary stages of more *yakṣas* and Bodhisattvas finally emerge in the Gupta period as powerful Buddha statues effulgent with compassion and loving friendliness.

After the death of Aśoka, the Maurya empire starts disintegrating and the idea of *Dhamma* gets a shock at the hands of Pushyamitra. In less than fifty years the political map of India and Afghanistan is completely different. Whereas people's art, which may be called "archaic", survives the fall of an empire the royal imperial art itself is buried with the empire. Why? Because this attempted innovation of the style did not arise primarily within the art, among the sculptor and artists. It was imposed upon them by power above, though some of the artists may have been willing to meet the challenge. However, when the supreme strength of an empire ended, an important and coherent art style also passed its zenith and died a royal death.

About two and half centuries later the Kushanas founded the second empire by subjugating the four Yuezhi tribes and within two generations they were already masters of a large territory. The founder of the empire used such grandiloquent titles on his coins and inscriptions as *Maharaja, Rajatirāja, Devaputra* and *Kaisara* even though they become standardized as Shāonāno Shāo from the time of Kanishka. This in itself is a good indication to show how they were influenced by Central Asian, Parthian, Indian and Roman ideas and were eager to claim all. When their power stabilized they adopted the titles in the Śaka language which formed the western part of the Kushan empire. I have already said earlier that the Kushan administration was not overcentralized like the Mauryan. Neither from inscriptions nor from coins we get any indication of a top heavy bureaucracyt, the 18 *Tīrthas* and numerous *Adhyakṣas* and so on as stated by Kauṭilya. On the other hand, they seem to continue the Śaka-Pahlava pattern of decentralising administration by delegating powers to Mahākṣatrapas and Kṣatrapas, who for all practical purposes were independent to administer, issue their coins, make grants, and who could appoint donation masters, erect images and build temples. The feaudatory character of the Kushan polity can also be inferred from such title as *Sarvaloka Iśvarasa Mahīśvarasa* of Wima Kadphises which reminds of later post-Gupta titles like *Parameśvara* adopted by kings. The Kṣatrapas exercised their powers through military officers known as *Daṇḍanāyakas* and *Mahādaṇḍanāyakas* who seem to have occupied important positions in the Kushana polity. During the reign of Kanishka, for example, we hear of *Daṇḍanāyaka* Lāla, who served Kṣatrapa Vespasi as his Donation-master. Mathura epigraphs provide so many names of such officers. One of the *Mahādaṇḍanāyakas* Hummiyaka Canyakka even gave his name to a Buddhist monastery. The centrifugal forces, because of the feudatory, hiearchical and thus decentralized administration, were counterbalanced by the proclaimed association of divine elements with the ruler. The Kushan kings remained 'sons of heaven' (Devaputras), inspite of their Buddhist faith, for this idea was foreign to Buddhist theories of the origin of kingship. And this was also not in complete accord with the early Brahmanical theories as some scholars have argued.

This leads us to the dynastic sanctuaries of Surkh Kotal and Mat, one in the Western part and the other in the Eastern part of the Kushan empire. From the now famous inscription of Surkh Kotal it is clear that the temple was built in the time of Kanishka and that it decayed for a time due to troubled political conditions and that it was restored in the reign of Huvishka by a high ranking officer named Nokonzoko and he was assisted by two other officers of the same rank. The Mathura inscriptions published by Daya Ram Sahni (*JRAS*, 1924) similarly refers to the restoration of a *devakula*, which Huvishka's grandfather built along with a tank, on commission by the *Mahārāja Rajatirāja Devaputra* Huvishka 'who had restored their kingdoms to fierce heroes when they entreated mercy'. The restoration works were entrusted to a certain Saukre, a *Bakanpati*, the son of a *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*. We do not know which *Devakula* it refers to; it may be the Mat one, or else this may indicate that there was more than one *Devakula* at Mathura. The similarity of account between the Surkh Kotal and Mathura epigraphs is noteworthy. Both the *Devakulas* were restored after a period of political crisis by loyal officers of non-Indian origin during the early part of Huvishka's reign. And Huvishka takes the epithet *sacadhramathitasa*, steadfast in the True Law' exactly like Kujula Kadphises who takes this title on his coins. The Buddhist legends on Kanishka report a rebellion brought about after a conspiracy during Kanishka's last campaign for the conquest of the North. If this is true, no wonder a political crisis overtook the Kushans towards the end of Kanishka's career and lasted the reign of Vashishka. It was Huvishka, who restored the fortunes of his family. Naturally to demand loyalty and devotion from his officers and people one of the first things he did was to restore the *Devakulas* in both parts of the empire.

But what is important is not merely the political motives behind the *Devakulas* but the role they played in art history. There seems to be a unity of imperial intention to give governmental direction to art. Both the Surkh Kotal and the Mat statues are rigorously frontal in setting and signify power perhaps and look stiff and arrogant. But there is a certain quality and constume which makes the Surkh Kotal statue a product of local forces and environments whereas the Mathura one clearly looks outlandish in the area. Perhaps this was made by imported Śaka Pahlava sculptors who had neither the knowledge of, nor sympathy with, the local ideas and traditions. Or else, it was made by local craftsman who had no sympathy with the subject and just made it to order.

Although it appears that for a while attempts were made to introduce this outlandish tradition in making the standing Bodhisattvas and seated Buddhas in the eastern part of the empire, they were of no avail and could not strike roots in the area and therefore even while the Kushanas were holding political power in the east they had to give way to the predominance of Indian spirit in art. In fact the two areas of Kushan art production advanced along separate paths in different directions. The art of the western part may be regarded as essentially the official art of the Kushan kings and the ruling hierarchy. Once the direction was given and the initiative taken, it was accepted by not only the ruling community but also by the people of mixed origins living in the western part of the empire.

We might go into the political and cultural background in the development of the Western idiom of Kushana art. The Kushans had succeeded the Indo-Greeks, Śakas and Pahlavas in what became the western part of the empire. They had first to adjust themselves with the various ethnic groups and ideas in Afghanistan and then gradually they had confrontation with the people and ideas in the Indus, and still later with those of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā doab. By the time they had founded their empire they were left with nothing from their original homeland except perhaps the idea of divinity of the king and certain items of accoutrements. They had no alternative but to be eclectic in their attitude. They were not concerned like Aśoka very much to impose uniformity in life and culture. It is also important to note that the Kushans kept the centre of political gravity in areas west of the Indus and north of Hindukush, and gave a political stability and security to area after more than two hundred years of over mobility and strifes of peoples of multiple origin resulting into a hectic mishmash but without any coherent development of ideas and life. The Kushans by bringing peace and balance in life as it were created a situation when some sort of order, or a system, could be brought into existence.

This brings us to the coins which are normally considered as minor art. But for periods like that of the Indo-Greeks, Śakas, Pahlavas and Kushans they provide invaluable material for the interpretation of major arts. People cut off from their homelands for good, with no alternative but to become part and parcel of the new society and land, because of their essentially nomadic or semi-nomadic tribal background, needed a guidance from their leaders, i.e. the king. Coins became the most handy and easily distributive type of material for spreading the new possibilities of compromise and giving directions to the pressing demand.

The Indo-Greeks, Śakas and Pahlavas had used coins to experiment with, and introduce, new ideas. Syncretic tendency in art and religion can be traced back to them. To give only few examples, the idea of Gaṇeśa from a composite type of Zeus and elephant, of Śiva from Poseidon, and even introducing the historical Buddha in the form of a king seated crosslegged, the idea of Gajalakṣmī and so on. The experimental phase continued even upto the time of Kujula and Wima Kadphises and I feel inclined to give Kujula the credit of introducing the first recognizable Buddha figure. Śiva seems as if fairly standardized on Wima's coins. But for eclecticism and definitive directions one has to look to the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka. The attitude of the Kushan kings gave ample opportunity to the travelling craftsmen from the West as well as to the local craftsmen of mixed tradition for a whole new world of imagination; there was no dearth of ideas and mythology and once the freedom to mix legends was available at the initiative of the kings, artistic activities flourished immensely. In their attempt to synthesize the Greek, the Roman, the Iranian, the Indian and whatever local or Central Asian was there, they created a syncreticism rather than a synthesis at first until they matured into a developed style later. Impact of the Kushanas, as foreigners, in the liberty with which the artists incorporated extraneous influences may not be denied.

Let there be no conflusion, Kanishka started the practice of giving the names of gods and goddesses along with their formal representations on the coins; otherwise who knows, perhaps scholars would have challenged the identification of the Buddha on his coins too as they do in the case of those on the coins of Maues and Kujula. From the coins of Kanishka, thus, we know Helios, Selene and Hepaistos of the Graeco-Roman tradition, Miro, Mao, Athsho, Oado, Arooashpo, Farro, Orlangno, Ardoksho, Nana or Nanaia, or Nanashao, Mazdoano, Manaobago, and even Ahurmazda from the Iranian tradition, and Oesho (for Śiva) and Oemo (for Uma) and Boddo, or Sakamano Boydo, of the Indian. To the long list Huvishka adds Asheiksho, Shaoreoro, Riom or Roma Serapis, Mahaseno, Skando, Komaro, Bizago etc. Whether this shows ecelcticism of the Kushan kings or it merely indicated the existence of diverse religions and sects in the Kushan empire, the fact remains that by issuing these coins the government at once standardized the anthropomorphic forms of so many gods and goddesses for the artist. Ordinary men perhaps could not have given this direction; it required the boldness of a king and the authority of a government.

Like Aśoka, Kanishka also took initiative in calling a Buddhist Council for the reorganization of the *Saṁgha* and to clarify the views of the different schools. And we are told, after the deliberations were over, Kanishka got the entire *Vibhāṣā Śāstra* engraved on copper sheets and deposited under a *stūpa*. Just as he intended to settle the doctrinal controversy in the *Saṁgha*, he settled the issue of the anthropomorphical representation of the Buddha by overcoming all traditions. I do not want to go into the problems of chronology of Gandhara art here but I do feel that the Buddha's image on the coins is so rigid and hieratic that it must have been the result of a lengthy process and, in my opinion, the art of Gandhara must have had a much earlier beginning.

The Kushan power was overthrown in the Gaṅga-Yamunā valley after about a hundred years of dominance and earlier than it disintigrated in the western part of its domain. The indigenous tradition had already shown its strength in this area. On the one hand Indian kings and other political commuinities like Yaudheyas etc. were busy reshaping the political destinies after the overthrow of the Kushana power and on the other artistic, literary and cultural activities were being so reorganized that by the time, within about 100 years, when the Gupta power was being established India was reaching its classical age.

The age of overcentralized empire and the age of foreign domination, of the Mauryas and the Kushans respectively, were over. The Guptas ruled over a smaller empire. In fact they effectively and directly administered only what was the heartland of India, but with liberal policy of decentralization and enlightened patronage they presided over the classical age of Indian history. With the rise of the Gupta power, political unification reappears in India and a liberal political philosophy and prosperous economy made cultural and artistic unity pervade an area wider than that controlled by real political authority (e.g. Ajantā). This was an age when, for at least one century, if not more, peace prevailed throughout the Gangetic valley, when the Chinese traveller was amazed at the mildness of the imperial administration, when guilds of merchants endowed temples not only for purely religious motives but also with the wish to make their cities more beautiful, when even little towns, far from great centres of culture, possessed able poets ready to turn out beautiful Sanskrit verses on demand, when city governors were proud to record the fact that they were on warm and friendly terms with the citizens whom they controlled, when smiths were capable of handling masses of iron with a proficiency which no ancient or medieval craftsman could imitate, when mighty emperors thought their skill in music as worthy of commemoration as their triumphs in battle, and when verily the sculptures and painters produced works of the utmost spirituality. This was surely a period of high civilization in every sense, but specially in the truest sense of the term-an age of equilibrium, when human relations reached a degree of kindliness rare in the history of the world and when the best minds of India expressed the fulness and goodness of life in imperishable art and literature.

In the Gupta period we find no direct control of art production by kings. At least there is no evidence. Among hundreds of carvings of this epoch at Sarnath the only statues which bear the name of Gupta kings like Kumaragupta and Budhagupta are actually dedicated by a Buddhist monk Abhayamitra. The masterpiece of the Gupta sculpture, and for that matter of Indian sculpture as a whole, the seated Buddha in the *Dharmachakra-mudrā* at Sarnath, gives no royal name and the great artist also chose to remain anonymous. It is rare to find such superb example of a combination of achievement and detachment.

If at all we want to speak of Gupta art in the sense of a reflex of the activities of the great kings of the line, or direct patronage, we would have to consider the powerful rock cut Vaiṣṇava images of Udayagiri at the very beginning of the fifth century A.D. associated chiefly with Chandragupta II. But here we must note that Chandragupta had moved out to conquer the whole world as proclaimed by his minister in the inscription found there. No wonder if the Varāha shows great power in liberating the earth so delicately sculptured and the Viṣṇu is having an imperial relaxation.

Perhaps we might also examine coins if we want to know about the royal interest in the governmental execution of art. We cannot help noting how soon the traces of foreign influence in the throne etc. is eliminated and how beautifully the Kushan Ardoksho is transformed into Lakṣmī. For the first time and perhaps for the last, for there is no other example in the world coinage, we find the coin legends in verses; so overwhelming was the impact of art, poetry and music on the age. It is indicative of the spirit that the Gupta kings are represented on their coins as playing a Vīnā or doing a painting. Samudragupta takes pride in declaring his excellence as a singer and musician, as a poet and artist. Kumaragupta is also shown playing *Vajra* on his coins and the pleasing variety of types introduced by Kumaragupta on his coinage stands testimony to his love of artistic variety.

It seems the Gupta kings and the government only played the healthy role of a patron giving full freedom whether willingly or unwillingly to artists to develop their own genuius. But in it lies the secret of greatness of Gupta art. Whether it is because we reach a stage in the art history, or in the history of civilization, where this is bound to happen, or because the Gupta kings were more tolerant and benevolent rulers, or because the social and political institutions had by now attained maturity, or because the economic conditions no more made the artist dependent on royal mood, the fact remains that we have hardly any sculpture worth the name which was directly the outcome of royal order. If there were any, they have not survived. The characteristics of Gupta art quality is so universal that it is no more possible to distinguish a royal from a folk or people's art. Take a terracotta, take a stone sculpture, take a sealing, take the paintings - they are all imbued with the same effulgence of great creativity of art. We have no evidence to correlate the golden age of Indian sculpture and the height of the political fortunes of the Gupta state. Perhaps this art belonged in the entire movement which was taking place in the Gupta period.

2

ASSOCIATION OF HORSE HEAD WITH BRAHMĀ

R.C. Agrawala

Hayagrīva, one of the prominent incarnations of Viṣṇu, is shown in horse-headed human form. The *Purāṇas* contain enough material, about this deity, also known as *Hayaśīrṣa* and *Aśvaśīrsa*. When the earth was submerged under water, the demons named Madhu and Kaiṭabha took away the four *Vedas* in the very presence of Brahmā. Brahmā approached *Viṣṇu* and sought his assistance in restoring the *Vedas* back to him with the result that Viṣṇu assumed the form of a horse (*Hayagrīva*) and started singing hymns from the *Sāmaveda*. On hearing the musical sound of *Sāmaveda mantras*, the two demons left the *Vedas* and moved in search of that melodious music. Thus Viṣṇu took hold of the *Vedas* and handed over them back to Brahmā. That is how the horse-headed god came to be associated with *Sāmaveda*.[1] This finds confirmation in the unique seventh century Kashmīrī bronze of single-faced and standing Brahmā, now preserved in the Indian Art Museum at Berlin[2], Germany. (Stella Kramrisch, *Manifestation of Śiva*, Philadelphia, 1981, fig. 129 on p.156). Here Brahmā is accompanied by four standing human attendant figures, two on each side, but one of them is "horse headed". Thus we come accross here the depiction of four *Vedas* in human form (the horse-headed one being *Sāmaveda*)[3]. In Hemadri's *Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* (A.D. 1260 - 1270), we find a reference to the association of horse-head with *Sāmaveda* i.e. *Sāmavedaḥ Hayānanaḥ*.[4]

The *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, a work composed in about 450 A.D., does refer to the *Vedas* in hybrid human form, having horse and human bodies *Haya-Narā-Kṛtiṁ*.[5] V.S. Pathak also quotes later texts wherein images of *Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma* and *Atharva* are described as having respectively the faces of ass, goat, horse and monkey. Here too, the horse-head is clearly associated with *Sāmaveda*. (The problem of theriomorphic representations of the *Ṛgveda* and its two *śākhās* have well been discussed by Dr. K.K. Thapalyal[6] on the basis of Gupta sealings from Rājghāṭ, Varanasi, and now preserved in the Allahabad Museum and Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi).

The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, a work of fifth-sixth century A.D., throws important light on the depiction of the *Vedas* and their close association with Brahmā. According to this text (Chapter 46, verses 8-9), Brahmā's frontal face represents the *Ṛgveda*, face to the right is *Yajurveda*, the face at back is the *Sāmaveda* and the left one is that of the *Atharvaveda.*[7] It is further stated therein (Chapter 73, verses 42-43) that, the *Vedas* should be represented in the form of following deities i.e. *Ṛgveda* as Brahmā, *Yajurveda* as Vāsava (Indra), *Sāmaveda* as Viṣṇu and *Atharva-veda* as Śambhū (Śiva). Besides this, verse 42 here specifically associates "the face of a horse (*Aśva-Vadana*) with *Sāmaveda.*"[8] Thus the following information is available in the above text :-

(a) The four faces of Brahmā represent the four *Vedas*.

(b) The back face of Brahmā is that of *Sāmaveda*, to be shown as horse-headed.

The Government Museum at Bikaner, Rajasthan, acquired a few years ago, a unique medieval icon of Brahmā in standing pose. It is a very well preserved specimen hailing from village Ḍhābā, Dist. Nagaur. Entered at Serial No. 2211/91 in the Museum Register, the frontal part depicts three heads for the deity in a row, the central one being bearded in a traditional manner, Brahmā here carries *śruk* and manuscript in upper hands; the lower left hand carries the *kamaṇḍalu*, while the lower right hand shows *varadākṣa*. The halo behind his head is equally charming and so are the various ornaments put on by Brahmā himself. The swan vehicle appears below his lower right hand. The unfinished back portion of this particular Brahmā icon is of unusual iconographic interest which has a horse-headed male figure, on its back without any weapon in the hands. The particular sculptor of the medieval period (12th century) has thus specifically and aptly carved the *Sāmaveda* (as *Aśva vadana*) aspect of Chaturmukha Brahmā on the lines cited in the *Viṣṇudharmottara-Purāṇa* discussed above. Any other four-faced Brahmā icon of this type has not been reported so far.

A passing reference may also be made to a rare stone panel studded into the 10th century Chauhan pavillion popularly known as Jāgeśvara at Ṣādarī (near Rāṇakpur, Distt. Pali) of Rajasthan. The central portion of this slab presents Sūrya in the form of an *Aśva* (horse); next appears "mare headed" Sañjñā - his wife and lastly their twin issues i.e. Aśvinīkumāras likewise horse headed in the standing pose. This is a graphic carving of the Paurāṇic theme narrated in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.[9]

FOOT - NOTES

1. N.P. Joshi, 'Association of a Horse with the Vedas', *Kalā* - Journal of Indian Art History Congress, Guwahati, vol. v, 1998-99, pp. 5-7.
2. *Treasures of Indian Art* - Germany's Tribute to India's *Cultural Heritage*, ed. Saryu Doshi, *Indian Art Museum* Berlin and National Museum, New Delhi publication, Delhi, 1998, No. 40 on p.43 as described by M. Yaldiz who very kindly supplied a copy of this beautiful catalogue for my permanent reference at Jaipur.
3. N.P. Joshi, *op.cit.*, fig. 1 - a line drawing of the Brāhmā bronze in Berlin Museum is published in *Kalā*, v. The bronze measures 24 cm. in height.

4. V.S. Pathak, "A Sealing of the Atharvaṇika Charana", *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Varanasi 26(2), 1964, p.215.

5. Ibid., p. 216; *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, ed. E. Krishnamacharya, G.O.S., Baroda, 1967, Chapter XII, verse 10, p.97.

6. K.K. Thaplyal, Bulletin of *Museums and Archaeology* in U.P., Lucknow, No. 7 1971, pp.25-28 and plate.

7. D.C. Bhattacharyya, *Pratimā Lakṣaṇa of the Viṣṇudharmottara*, Delhi, 1991, p.17; Priyabala Shah, *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III Khanda, Baroda, Vol. I, 1958, p.162 and Vol. II, 1961, p.168.

8. D.C. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, p.165; Shah P.B., *op.cit.*, Vol. I, 1958, p.203. Dr. Priyabala Shah has corrected the reading of Stella Kramrisch who had wrongly associated a 'dog's' face with *Sāmaveda* here.

9. B.N. Sharma, 'Revanta in Art, Literature and Epigraphs', *East and West*, Rome, Italy, Vol. XXIII (1-2), 1973, pp. 155-56 and figure 1; *Iconography of Revanta*, Delhi, 1975, pp.37-38, fig. 1.

AN EARLY IMAGE OF ĀDITYA FROM TALAKĀḌU, GAṄGAVĀḌĪ

Prof. M.A. Dhaky

Gaṅgavāḍī was the region ruled by the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu (Talakāḍ), in ancient, pre-medieval, and early medieval times from *c.* early third century to A.D. 1000, located as the region was in south-western Karnataka (Karṇāṭaka) ancient Karṇāṭadeśa as that greater province was then called. Gaṅgavāḍī's south-western area shared a territorial border with the Toṇḍaināḍu of the Pallavas of Kāñcī which geographically is the northern province within the present day Tamilnadu (Tamiḷnāḍu). Gaṅgavāḍī, apparently as a result, shared some art/style elements with Toṇḍaināḍu, particularly the 'schematic emphasis,' in the rendering of sculpture in stone which likewise, and for long, was executed in granite.[1]

In recent decades, the Gaṅgavāḍī art and architecture have received more attuned attention due to a renewed interest in that region in the archaeological circles as well as in one group of the historians of art. A few papers[2] and at least one monograph[3] focus on the generally known as well as hitherto less known, even some unknown, material together with the facets/aspects of the style of art and architecture that prevailed in Gaṅgavāḍī region. The monuments and sculptures encountered in two Karṇāṭan Jaina centres - Śravaṇabeḷgoḷa, very famous, and Kambadahalli, less well-known - recently had been freshly discussed,[4] in terms of time long after the early and fairly detailed conventional descriptions given by the archaeologists in the annual reports of the Mysore Department of Archaeology[5] together with those on the associated (or otherwise) inscriptions by the early epigraphers.[6] The recent excavations at Talakāḍu have further reinforced the interest in Gaṅgāvāḍī art and architecture.[7] The present very brief paper, modestly intends to add to what is till now not known in the field of the history of Gaṅgavāḍī art by focusing on a single sculpture which, however, is important because it belongs to a relatively early phase of Gaṅgavāḍī art, the examples of which are very, very rare. Moreover, the piece (*see* plate), to all seeming, is hitherto unpublished.

Only the bust of the Sūrya image (which is in granite) apparently is preserved (Fig.1). The sculptures in granite are best viewed from a point a little distance away, as the art historians often have experienced while working on sites such as Mahābalipuram. The earliness of the image is apparent by virtue of its strongly summarized features, the ethnic mould, too, seems more ancient than what is discernible in the tenth century Gaṅgavāḍī instances. Moreover, the aureole, the crown, the broad necklace and the *channavīra* are delineated without essential filled in detail, one more feature suggesting earliness. Turning to the iconographic aspects, the upraised two arms of the deity carry lotus-stalk (*mṛnāla-daṇḍa*) bearing in each case a compactly large, solid looking lotus-shaped bud. The image thus accords with the southern manner of representing Sūrya as met with in the instances within lower Drāviḍadeśa. The schematic abstraction emphasizes its dignity and innate power with luminosity characteristic of the solar deity. Its date, as can be guessed by its style, may not be later than the seventh century, in which event it is earlier than the examples of Sūrya in Tamilnadu, most of which belong to the ancient Coḷanāḍu territory in Tamilnadu.

FOOT - NOTES

1. Though much cannot be made out of this small piece of information.
2. (i) I.K. Sharma, "Western Ganga Jaina Vestiges at Tippuru, District Mandya," *Rangavalli* (Recent Researches in Indology) (*S.R. Rao Felicitation Volume*) *Eds*. A.V. Narasimha Murthi, B.K. Gururaja Rao, Delhi, 1983, pp.233-240. (ii) I.K. Sarma, "Brick Temples of Western Gangas," *Śrīnidhiḥ* (Perspectives in Indian Archaeology, Art and Culture) (*Shri K.R. Srinivasan Festschrift*), *Eds*. K.V. Raman *et. al.*, Madras, 1983, pp. 67-83.
3. I.K. Sarma, *Temples of the Gaṅgas of Karṇāṭaka*, ASI, AST, No. 6, New Delhi, 1992.
4. M.A. Dhaky, "Gaṅga Jaina Sculpture," *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture, Eds*. U.P. Shah and M.A. Dhaky, Ahmedabad, 1975; and K.V. Soundara Rajan, "Chapter 29, Gaṅgavāḍi Style, *c*. A.D. 900-1000, Gaṅgas of Talkāḍ," *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, Volume I, Part 2, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 184-203, plates 582-619. Also, *cf*. I.K. Sarma, *Temples of the Gaṅgas*, Delhi, 1992. And one recent publication by Hampa Nagarajaiah, namely *A History of the Early Ganga Monarchy and Jainism*, Bangalore, 1999.
5. *Mysore Archaeological Department, Annual Report*, 1927, 1935, 1942, 1947-56.
6. K.V. Ramesh, *Inscriptions of the Western Gaṅgas*, Delhi, 1984. This is a monograph giving updated information using as it does all past publications, in a critical and incisive way, the references to sources are all duly recorded.
7. A.V. Narasimha Murthy, D.V. Devraj, "A Newly Excavated Jaina Brick Temple," *Kalā*, Volume I, 1994-95 Guwahati, pp. 1-5. The authors date the damaged image found in the sanctuary to the sixth century. The original brick temple had been provided with a veneer in stone of a Vaprabandha sort of *adhiṣṭhāna*, seemingly in the tenth century. If the walls, too had been similarly provided with a moulded stone masonary, no material remains apparently have survived.

4

ICONOGRAPHIC GLEANINGS IN VĀYU PURĀṆA

Prof. R.C. Sharma

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* is an early work among the eighteen *Mahāpurāṇas* and it contains valuable stock of material on different aspects of Indian culture including performing and visual arts. While music and dance have been provided separate chapters[1], the references to art and iconography are scattered here and there but generally met with in the description of deities, their abodes and other sacred places. The analytical review of their gleanings presents an interesting and sometimes an exciting study to be conversant with the evolution of Hindu or Brāhmanical plethora, its dependence or interdependence on the earlier *Vedic* and *Āraṇyaka* thought, assimilation with the local forceful traits and an aspiration to proclaim the superiority or to establish the strength of the emerging deities. At the same time the work furnishes rich and graphic details of architectural components and their artistic renderings. The present paper is, however, confined to project some iconographic innovations.

ŚIVA : Since *Vāyu Purāṇa* is a Ṣaiva treaty it is but natural that the major part deals with Śiva and his different forms, attributes, valours, deeds and predominance over other gods. Brahmā eulogises him as Supreme Being as creator, protector and annihilator.[2]

The appearance of Lord as described in the second part provides some important characteristics, a few of which are rather uncommon. The garland of flowers of every season with fragrance, dark complexion like blue lotus, copper coloured large eyes, drooping lips, upturned eyes, bark garments, right arm clasping the left one, sharp edged spear (*Paṭṭiśa*) in left hand, shining sword, cool-rayed moon, golden *Kamaṇḍalu* are his features.[3] At another place he is mentioned as holding lotus in the hand, scantly clad and having tufted hair.[4] He is also conceived as terrific and holding a skull.[5]

Crescent on head, third eye on forehead, bow and spear as weapons and bull as mount were the distinct cognizances of Nīlakaṇṭha.[6] Besides wearing lot of garlands, mounting on bull, holding bow and skull, wearing serpent sacred thread, the terrible looking Lord clads himself with the hide of black buck or antelope.[7] Apart from anthropomorphic form Śiva is to be realised in the *Liṅga* form also. He manifested himself as a massive column of flame touching heaven and earth and the *liṅga* in the middle. Both Brahmā and Viṣṇu were astonished to see that form of extraordinary brilliance of infinite nature.[7a] With the emergence of faces on it the *liṅgdbhava* aspect is to be conceived.

Although a good number of animals and beasts remain in his association yet tigers are his followers and creations.[8]

The iconography of Śiva as witnessed in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* suggests a stage when lot of attributes were assigned to him but some became obsolete with the passage of time. Garland of seasonal flowers was generally overcome by the garland of skulls, lotus in hand was replaced by *khappara* or *kapāla*. Similarly, tiger or lion went to serve Pārvatī or Durgā. It was Gupta or pre-Gupta epoch when lion is seen in association with Śiva as in the Mathura sculptures. Kālidāsa also refers to lion as servant or attendant of Śiva although it had fallen from grace and bull dominates.[9]

The Nikumbha remains a mystery in *Raghuvaṁśa* but *Vāyu Purāṇa* seems to unfold it. There is no clear mention of elephant headed Gaṇeśa in this book, although Skanda or Kārttikeya has been repeatedly remembered with all his prowess, deeds and attributes. A senior *gaṇa* (attendant) is named as Nikumbha and addressed to as Gaṇeśvara when instructed to dissolute the city of Varanasi which was controlled by the king Divodāsa. Another name of this chief of attendants Gaṇeśa is Kṣemaka, a demon, who stood by the side of Śiva. But this Gaṇeśa or Gaṇeśvara is the epithet of Nikumbha or Kṣemaka as he was probably the head of attendants of Śiva.[10]

As pointed out earlier the followers or attendants of Śiva were mainly lions[11] or lion faced *gaṇas* who were very powerful with claws like trident. Even Vīrabhadra who destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa was a lion.[12]

In view of the *Vāyu Purāṇa's* testimony, it may safely be concluded that Gaṇeśa had not emerged as a deity instead he i.e. Nikumbha or Kṣemaka is a lion attendant of Śiva. In sculpture also Gaṇeśa makes a late appearance and certainly not carved in the pre-Gupta period, rarely in the Gupta age but appears in the post-Gupta era and becomes popular in the Medieval times i.e. from the ninth century A.D.

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* highlights at least two forms of Śiva. In one form he is the Supreme Deity controlling everything in the world or universe and in the other, he is seen as a worldly person sometimes behaving abnormally. Mainā is fed up with the ill-mannered behaviour of her son-in-law and complains to Umā.[13]

Similarly, when he instructs Nikumbha or Gaṇeśvara to ruin Varanasi, his treatment seems to be rather unkind. Was he acting as Purandar or Purāmbhettā or Tripurāntaka even in case of Varanasi. The study of *Vāyu Purāṇa* perhaps leads to the conclusion that it was the age of the fusion of *Vedic* and *Laukika* streams i.e. *Loke vede ca*. That was the need of the hour for uniting the entire country through a common cultural string. Folk elements or Loka had to be taken into confidence while reviving the *Vedic* conventions.

ŚIVA GAṆAS : Besides the Chief *gaṇa* or Gaṇeśvara, there was a group of other attendants who looked like lions, tigers, elephants, horses, fierce cats and foxes with fat or thin bodies and looked funny due to their disproportionate or curious organs. Some did not have head, some had only one leg, some without eye or ears etc. They lived in the company of Śiva on the auspicious mountain Kailāśa.[14] These types of curious or composite figures are known as *ihāmṛgas. vyālākṛtīs* which are to be seen in the early sculptural art from about second century B.C. and which continue till medieval period.

SKANDA : Skanda or Kārttikeya is a very popular and powerful deity and finds mention at various places. He has been addressed as the son of Hara born of Umā and also of Agni, Gaṅgā and grove of *Śara* through Kṛttikās. He has six faces, twelve eyes and holds a lance *(Śakti)* along with a divine bell or a flag of staff.[15] His vehicle is peacock. His other names are Kārttikeya, Senāpati, Saḍānana, Kumāra, Guha, Mahāsena, etc.[16] The narration although incorporates all factors and legends associated with Skanda yet declares him as son of Śiva and Pārvatī.

In other context Kārttikeya is introduced to have been born in the Śarvavaṇa with six faces and walked to the Krauñca forest.[17] Here he is shown as seated in the chariot drawn by lions with lot of flags and bells.[18] Peacock as mount emerges in the fourth century A.D. and earlier he has cock as his mount or toy.

ARDHA-NĀRĪŚVARA : The composite form of Śiva and Pārvatī, i.e. Ardhanārīśvara is recollected at Kailāśa.[19] This form of Ardhanārī is seen in the sculptural renderings from the early Kushana period i.e. late first century or early second century A.D. and developed as Ardhanārīśvara in the Gupta age. Kālidāsa pays his oblation to this aspect in the opening verse of the *Raghuvaṁśam*.

MĀTṚKĀS : While the iconographic details are rather scanty we do come across several mother goddesses or Mātṛkās in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. They are : Umā, Sītā, Sinīvālī, Kuhu, Gāyatrī, Lakṣmī, Kīrtti, Dhṛti, Medhā, Lajjā, Kṣānti, Vapus, Svadhā, Puṣṭi, Kriyā, Sarasvatī, Sandhyā and Rātri all born of Śiva.[20] Some of these female deities come down from the Vedic texts. Mahākālī comes on the scene in the destruction of the sacrifice of Dakṣa alongwith the Bhūtas who were her followers but the iconographic features which developed, probably, later are missing.[21]

The critics may well consider it as an interpolation as this verse figures towards the close of a large chapter No. 39 which contains 355 *ślokas*, devoted to the narration of Śivapura. We are aware of the fact that the later part of the text of about 500 verses highlighting the religious importance of Gayā is generally accepted as an appendix of later period. At the same time it should also be borne in mind that Kālidāsa does mention Kālī in the *Kumārasambhavam*.[22] Here the specific features of the goddess such as garland of skulls, big teeth and fearful look are recorded. There are, however, some scholars who opine that Kālidāsa wrote only first eight chapters and the remaining text is a later addition.

FOOT - NOTES

1. *Vāyu Purāṇa* II, Ch. 24-25
2. त्वमेव सर्वस्य चराचरस्य लोकस्य कर्त्ता प्रलये च गोप्ता। *Vāyu Purāṇa* I. 54.100
3. *Ibid*. II. 39. 265-74
4. *Ibid*. I. 5
5. *Ibid*. I. 54.69
6. *Ibid*. I. 54. 107-8
7. *Ibid*. I. 55. 54-55

7a. *Ibid*. 55. 20-22 and 38-39

8. *Ibid* II. 39.285
9. *Raghuvaṁśam* II. 35
10. *Vāyu Purāṇa* II. 30. 36-38
11. *Ibid*. II. 39.285
12. *Ibid*. II. 39.297
13. *Ibid*. II. 30.32
14. *Ibid*. I. 54. 38-39
15. *Ibid*. I. 54. 17-24
16. *Ibid*. I. 41. 40-42
17. *Ibid*. I. 41. 37
18. *Ibid*. I. 41.38
19. *Ibid*. I. 41.36
20. *Ibid*. I. 55. 42-43
21. *Ibid*. II. 39. 298
22. *Kumārasambhavam* IX. 49

5

A RARE SCULPTURE OF ŚIVA-SŪRYA-ARDHANĀRĪ

Dr. T. Satyamurthy

The depiction of deities of several sects in a composite figure was a common trait of Indian art atleast from the Kushan period. This trend had reached the far east also as noticed in the composite figures of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva or Śakti on all the four sides of a *Śiva-liṅga* from Java, now preserved in the Indian Museum[1]. Since Gupta period, the same fixed set of four peripheral gods Śiva or Śakti, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Sūrya are shown around a massive *liṅga* in *pradakṣiṇā* order[2]. This had indeed contributed much to peace and good will among the warring seits[3]. The *Śilpa* texts have also accommodated such composite figures by giving religious sanction to such figure as Ardhanārīsvara, Harihara, Hiraṇyagarbha and Harihara-Pitāmah Harihara [4]. Nevertheless, the culmination of these composite figures as prescribed in the *Śilpa* texts are found in Central India during the end of 10th century A.D.[5]

In the far south, from the middle of 12th century A.D. such composite figures do appear especially in the middle and later Chola temples. The depiction of Sūrya in the composite figure of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā is common in medieval Chola temples. Four such similar figures adorn all the four gopura niches of Naṭarāja temple at Chidambaram (Tamilnadu)[6]. Among them the figure on the western *gopura* is in better state of preservation. This unique figure stands in *samabaṅga* with three faces and wear small ear rings that are generally worn by Brahmā in Chola period (Fig.2). The heads are placed against an oval aureole. In the right rear hand he holds *akṣ amālā* and in the left a *pāśa*. The next pair of hands have *paḍma* and the lower pair have small clubs. The front right hand is in *abhaya* and the front left is in *varada*. There is a single central wheel shown in profile below the pedestal and Aruṇa is shown unusually with full body in *padmāsana*. Four rearing horses are placed in profile on either side of the central wheel. This image evidently represents Sūrya in a composite form with Brahmā, Maheśvara and Viṣṇu[7], though the symbols held in hands do not clearly indicate the same. This rare depiction of Sūrya is further authenticated by the label inscription on the west gopura which reads "Sūryadevar"[8]. This clearly indicates the depiction of Sūrya with three heads during the Chola period.

In the Airāvateśvara temple at Dārāsuram (Thanjavūr, Tamilnadu) yet another composite sculpture of rare type is noticed. The temple constructed during the period of Rājarāja-II (A.D. 1150)[9], holds in one of the niches of the *agramaṇḍapa* a figure of unique three faced Ardhanārī (Fig.3). Stylistically it resembles the three-faced Sūrya figure of Chidambaram. Of the three faces, the central face wears small ear rings of Chidambarm type but it has a predominent central eye on the forehead. The *karaṇda-mukuṭa* decorates the central head and the side heads have *jaṭ āmukuṭas*. In the upper right hand deity holds *akṣamālā* and in the left a *pāśa*. In the next pair he holds a *khaṭvāṅga* and bestows *abhaya* and in the lowest right hand he holds a *gadā* and in the left a *daṇḍa*. In the front irght hand there is *padma* and in the left a *kapālapātra*. The right side drapery is upto the half thigh and in the left side it is extended upto knee conforming to the other Ardhanārī figures of Chola period. Necklace, armlets, waist band, *udarabandha* etc. are all similar to other contemporary Chola sculptures.

The *Śilpa* texts are silent over such a composite figure and it is interpreted as Ardhanārī[10] or Mahāmāyī[11]. A description of such a form is seen in the *Śivamahāpurāṇa*[12]. According to that the *Dēvas* appealed to Śiva to disclose his eteral blissful form for their worship. Pleased with their appeal Parameśvara (Śiva) appeared in Sūryamaṇḍala with *tējas* of crores of Lightenings; with eight hands, four faces and 12 eyes. He was in Ardhanārī form with *jaṭāmaṇḍalam*, decked with red flowers and red sandal paste. He was wearing red colour drapery. On all four sides four *Śaktis* viz. Uttarā, Bhodinī, Atyānī and Ekavaktrā accompanied him. He was flanked by Brahmā on the right side and Viṣṇu on the left side.

In the second circular ring, around him, again Sūrya, in the form of Śiva, and Candra, in the form of *Śakti*, were seen by the *Dēvas*. In the same circle Navagrahas were also present. It was disclosed by Parameśvara that He would be worshipped in the middle of Sūryamaṇḍala. The Śaivāgamas also refer to such a form as Śiva-Sūrya-Ardhanārī[13].

Such a composite figure is adorned as -

Souramaṇḍala madhyastam

Sāmbam samsārabheshojam

Nīlagrīvam Virūpākṣam

Namāmi Śivam Avyayam

The Dārāsuram composite figure is thus modelled out of the above description in *Śivamāhāpurāṇa*. Depicting Sūrya with three faces was common Chola period. In this figure the attributes of Ardhanārī Śiva were also added like the depiction of third eye. The Tamil literature, Tēvaram also endorses such a unified form of Śiva as "Arukkanānavar Araṇ" i.e. Śiva - Sūrya[14]; and hence this sculpture is identified as Śiva - Sūrya - Ardhanārī.

FOOT - NOTES

1. C. Sivaramamurti, *Royal Conquests and Cultural Migrations in South India and the Deccan,* Calcutta, 1955, p. 36.
2. Thomas S. Maxwell, *Discourses on Siva* Ed. Michael W. Meister, Bombay, 1984, p.79.
3. C. Sivaramamurty, *Ibid.*
4. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, T.A. Gopinatha Rao *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I., PI. II, Madras, 1914, App. C - p.53.
5. Archaeological Museum, Khajuraho, Acc. No. 2536.
6. James C. Harle, *Temple Gateways in South India*, Oxford, 1963, pp. 127-128.
7. H. Krishna Sastri, *South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses*, Madras, 1916, p. 236.
8. A R E, 1908, Part II, Paragraph 68, p. 68.
9. S.R. Balasubrahmanyan, *Later Chola temples*, Madras, 1979, pp. 225-234.
10. H. Krishna Sastri, *Ibid.*, p. 126.
11. *South Indian Studies*, pub. society for Archaeological, Historical, Epgraphical Studies, Madras, Pt. I pp. 134-143.
12. Śivamañjarī, Ed. P.S. Arunavasandan. Chennai, 1998, Part III, p. 358-359.
13. Śivamañjarī, *Ibid.*
14. Tirunāvakkarasar, Panniruthirumurai, V - 1013.

6

ARCHITECTURAL ORIGINALITY IN THE PUNJAB

Prof. Michael W. Meister

Among the most famous monuments of the Punjab, the great red-sandstone temple with its propylon at Malot in the Salt Range has often been misrepresented and misunderstood[1]. Standing on the edge of a great outcrop of rock above a fertile plateau ca. nine miles west of the pilgrimage spring at Katas, this large temple can be seen from a long distance, proclaiming its new pre-eminence in the early 10th century A.D. when it most likely was built. The temple was visited in 1848 by General James Abbott, whose account in the *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1849 was accompanied by two sketches of the temple (line drawing No. 1, 2)[2].

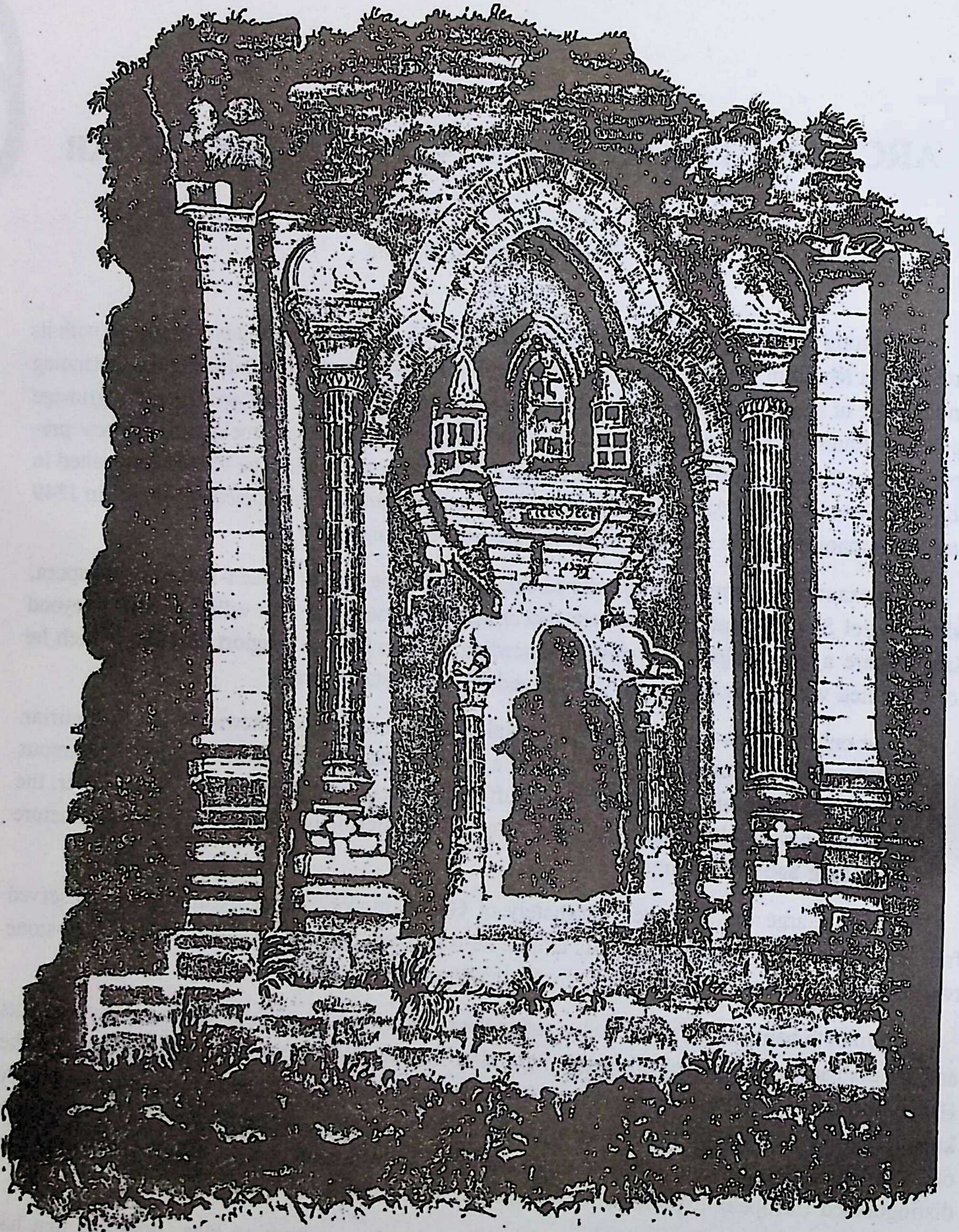
Alexander Cunningham speculated that this was the site of Hsüan-Tsang's Simhapura, which Aurel Stein instead perhaps more accurately associated with the valley of Murti beyond Katas where a great *stūpa* once stood.[3] According to Cunningham's report in 1873, which he accompanied with plans both of the temple and the fort it stands near,

> the only remains of any antiquity at Mallot are a temple and gateway in the Kashmirian style of architecture. They are built of a course sandstone of various shades of ochreous red and yellow, and many parts have suffered severely from the action of the weather, the surface having altogether crumbled away... The exterior pyramidal roof of the structure has long ago disappeared.

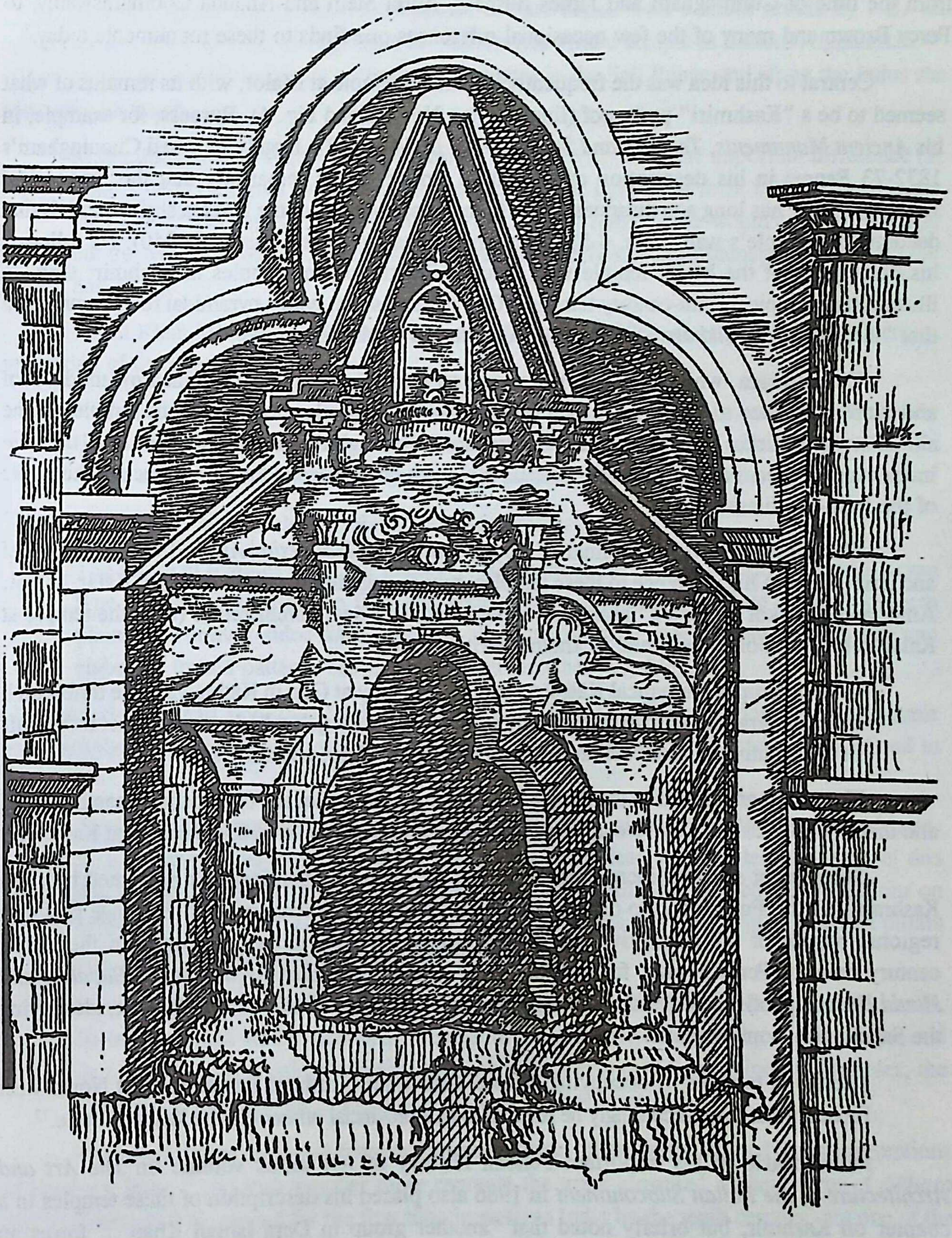
Of the large trefoil arches, ultimately of Gandharan origin, that Cunningham observed framing the cardinal subshrines of this temple he remarked "these ... have a T shaped key-stone two courses in depth, similar to those in the temples of Kashmir."[4]

On both banks of the upper Indus and in the rugged landscape of the Salt Range escarpments and its plateau, a number of other hill forts also survive. Within these, many structures of the Hindu period were built, ranging in date from the sixth of 11th centuries A.D.[5] The least poorly known of these sites are perhaps those at Bilot and north Kafirkot near the Chashma barrage north of Dera Ishmail Khan. Site plans of these two forts were prepared early in this century by two distinguished European explorers, A. Hargreaves and Aurel Stein.[6]

These early archaeologists also began to introduce a framing idea, however, that has coloured most subsequent references to all the structures in the Salt Range. This is true in part



Line Drawing No. 1 : Malot temple, Punjab (Pakistan)



Line Drawing No. 2 : Malot temple, detail of niche in entry from the time of Cunningham and James Burgess, Aurel Stein and Ananda Coomaraswamy, to Percy Brown and many of the few occasional references one finds to these monuments today.[7]

Central to this idea was the frequently illustrated temple at Malot, with its remains of what seemed to be a "Kashmiri" pent-roof (line drawing No. 1,2 and Fig. 4). Burgess, for example, in his *Ancient Monuments, Temples and Sculptures of India* in 1897, largely followed Cunningham's 1872-73 *Report* in his description of the Malot temple, again remarking that the "pyramidal *śikhara* or spire has long ago disappeared." He made no mention of the Nāgara shrine models that decorate the temple's wall (Figs. 4-5), although he illustrated them (his Plate 240). He followed his description of the Malot temple with a set of illustrations of temples in Kashmir; then, in illustrating the typical sixth-century temple at Gop in Saurashtra, with a pyramidal roof, commented that "the roof of the *śikhara* looks not unlike that of a Kashmiri temple."[8]

Cunningham, while of course remarking on the Malot temple's presumed pyramidal roof and its resemblance to Kashmiri structures, also had presciently observed of the temples at the site of north Kafirkot that he visited six years later "although they are all of small size, they are interesting as specimens of the ruder or later style, which succeeded the semi-Greek architecture of the Indo-Scythians."[9]

Coomaraswamy in his seminal *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* in 1927, is both brief and ambiguous in his reference to these temples, mixing together the monuments of Kalar, Malot, Amb, and Kafirkot as "brick" examples of north India's Nāgara architecture (only the temple at Kalar is brick) in one place, and in another writing that[10]

> In India proper the typical Kāśmīrī roof is found only at Gop in Kāṭhiāwād; the trefoil arch as an integral architectural form only in parts of the Punjab which were subject to Kaśmīr in the eighth and ninth cennturies, particularly at Malot and Kāfirkoṭ.

The trefoil arch found in the Punjab was, however, more a legacy of Gandhara than Kashmir; and that at Malot can hardly be compared to the typically Nāgara *candraśālā* motifs at Kafirkot.[11]

Subsequent scholars increasingly chose to focus on this political link presumed between Kashmir and the Punjab and to declare all the surviving monuments in the Salt Range part of a regional branch of the distinctive pent-roofed temple type found in Kashmir from the eighth century onward. Percy Brown, for example, in his history of *Indian Architecture : Buddhist and Hindu Periods* published in 1942, both solidified this assumption and over simplified it, identifying the Salt Range monuments as

> a series of temples ... occupying various sites in the Northern Punjab and the North West Frontier (that may) accordingly be referred to as a provincial offshoot of the Kashmiri style.[12]

James Harle in his important Pelican History of Art series volume on *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* in 1986 also placed his description of these temples in a chapter on Kashmir, but briefly noted that "another group in Dera Ismail Khān ... forms an extension of post-Gupta Madhyadeśa."[13]

Modern rethinking of these monuments in part began with a short article by J.E. van Lohuizen-De Leeuw in 1959 on fragments of "An Ancient Hindu Temple in Eastern Afghanistan."[14] In comparing the temple at Malot to those at other sites in the Salt Range and along the Indus she notes that although

> Malot does indeed display this (Kashmiri) influence ... the most important difference (at other sites) is the roof, which instead of showing the pyramidal form of Kaśmīr, displays the more or less conical *śikhara* common to ... North India ... We would propose to single out the temple at Malot ... as a rare example of a really strong influence of Kaśmir on the Salt Range.

Kamil Khan Mumtaz, in his *Architecture in Pakistan* (1985), also makes this distinction, remarking of the temple at Malot that it

> is typical of the four-square Kashmiri style, with an elaborate bay in each face flanked by fluted columns and capped by a trefoil arch. The roof was probably of stone, pyramidal in shape and stepped outwards in two or more stages.

Of temples at other sites in the Salt Range he also comments—

> The group of temples along the Indus represents the more normal northern or Indo-Aryan type ... modelled after the fifth and sixth century Gupta architecture of the Northern plain, with convex-sided *śikhara* towers, slightly projecting panelled bays in each side and elaborate fretted patterns based remotely on the Chaitya gable.

He concluded, as had Lohuizen-De Leeuw, that "there is not sufficient evidence of a 'Kashmir art' transplanted to the Punjab, and true derivations of this Kashmir architecture are confined to Mallot."[15]

Most crucial to our understanding of the architectural originality of the temple at Malot, and of the architects of the Punjab in this period, must be the least commented on aspect of this remarkable monument, the large curvilinear models of shrines that fill the central projections on its walls (line drawing No. 1,2 and Fig. 4). Of these, in describing the tall fluted attached pillars of the wall, Cunningham had mentioned only in passing.[16]

> In the recess between the pilasteres is a highly ornamented niche with trefoiled arch, flanked by small fluted pilasters. The roof of the niche first narrows by regular steps, and then widens into a bold projecting balcony, which supports three miniature temples, the middle one reaching up to the top of the great trefoiled recess.

That these "three miniature temples" are curvilinear, following the *latina* Nāgara conventions of northern India,[17] and that together these repreent the great clustered *śekharī* form of *śikhara* that architects had developed for the first time in western India by the tenth century, not one of the advocates of a "Kashmiri style" in the Punjab had observed.

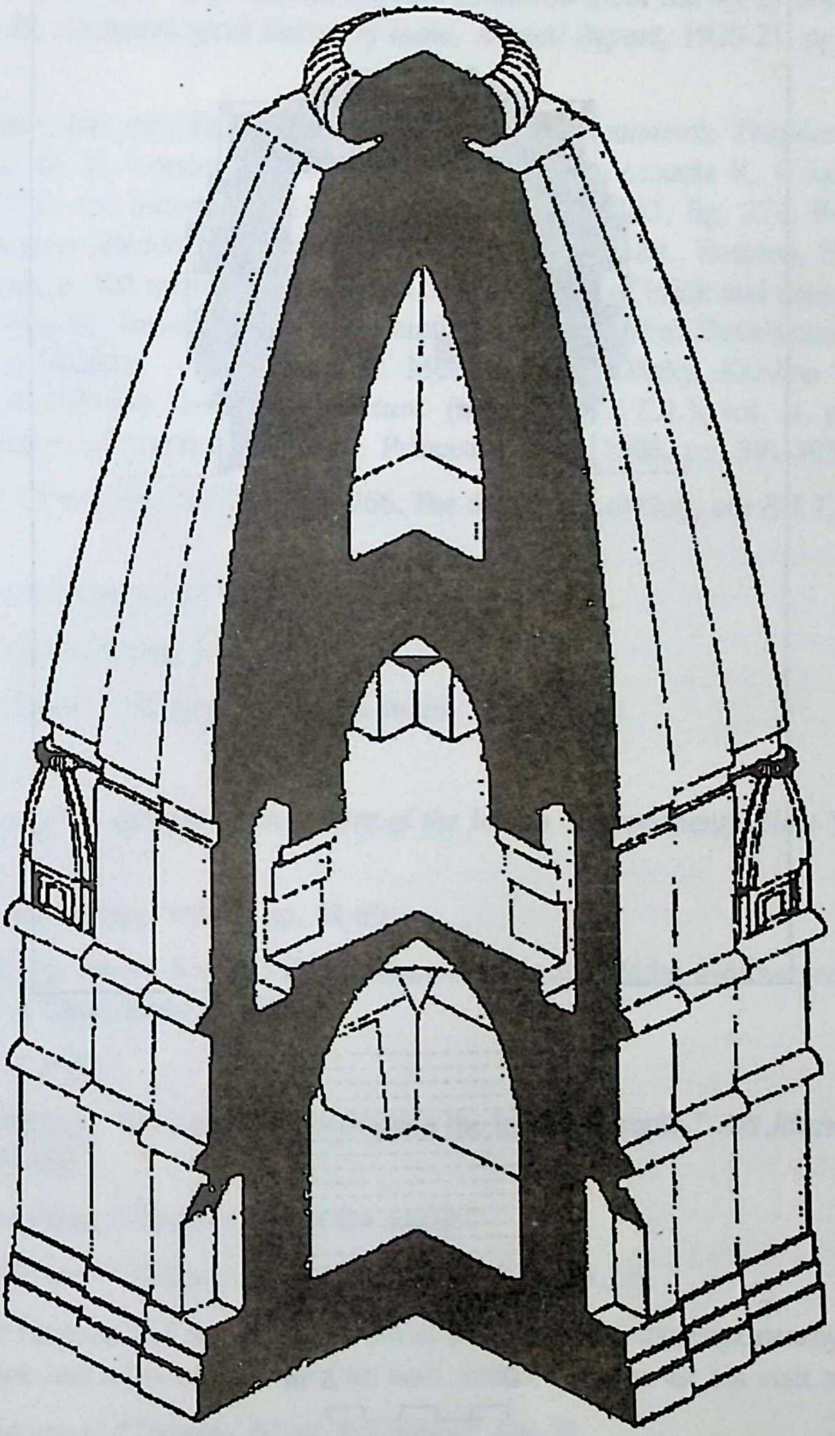
What I have called the "Gandhāra-Nāgara" typology for most temples at most sites in the Punjab from the sixth to the 10th centuries represents a particular local and original variation of this *latina* formulation for the, superstructure.[18] In the 10th century, as the multi-spired *śekharī* type of tower set a new standard across northern India, its image appeared as temple models on the walls at Malot, signalling the temple's local and translocal connections and its architect's knowing and creative originality. Flattened decorative corner turrets also marked the last great Hindu Śāhi temple of the late 10th century in the hill fort at Nandana (Line drawing No. 3).[19]

If the overall form of the temple at Malot does indeed consciously mimic the pent-roof model of Kashmir, it is nearly unique in doing so in the Salt Range.[20] Built probably at a time in the early 10th century when a strong matrimonial and political link did exist between the Hindu Śāhi kings and Kashmir, the temple still was constructed in a distinctive locally available red sandstone by local architects who chose to make a clear rhetorical point by placing large curvilinear Nāgara shrine-models over the temple's cardinal niches, combined with the trefoil arch and attic pediment typical of Kashmiri shrines.

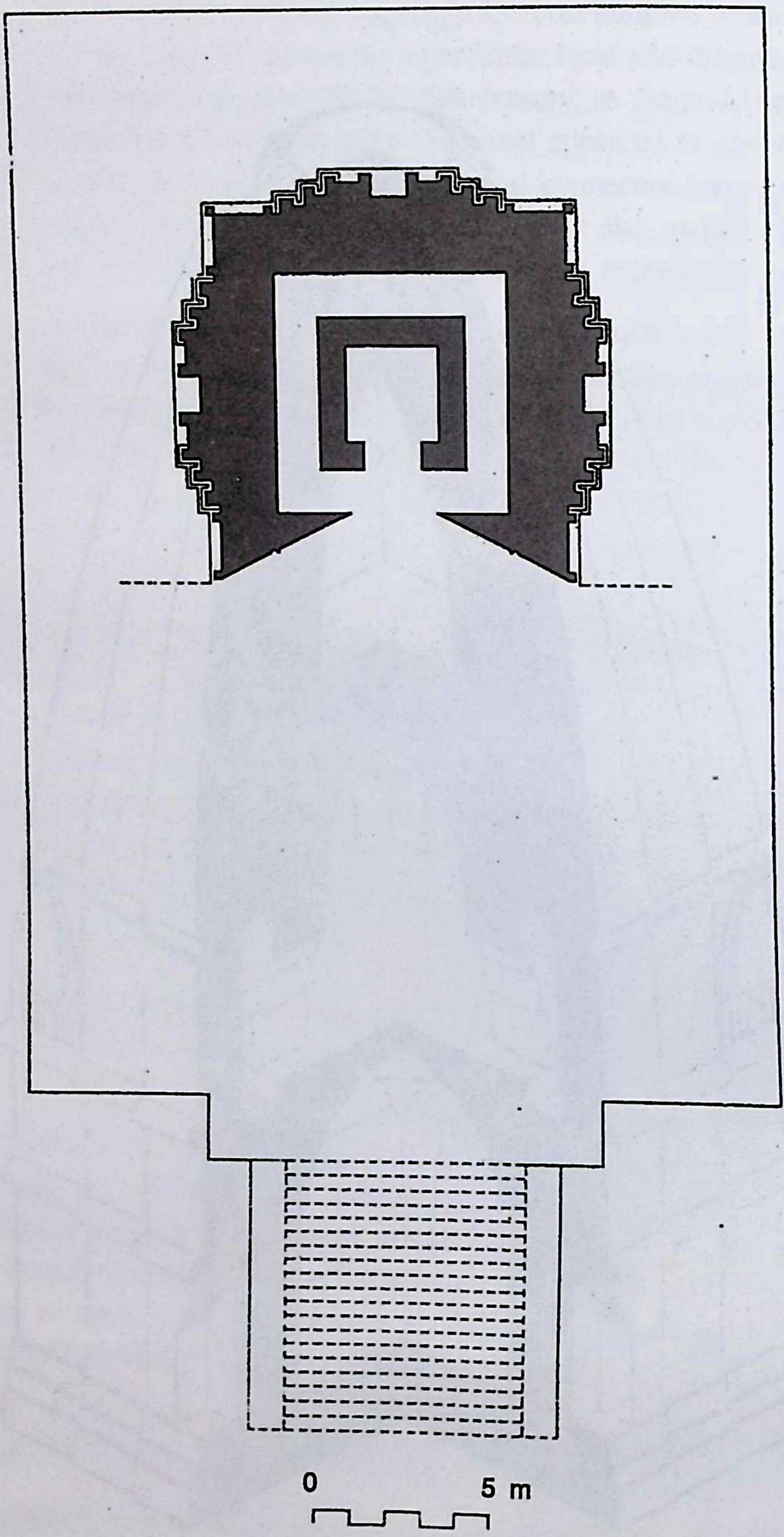
By contrast, at a second site, that of Mari-Indus across from Kalabagh, ruins of a large temple (Temple C) that had an inner ambulatory path (Line drawing No. 4) used Kashmiri-styled pyramidal pediments on its cardinal projections, but on a shrine that seems to have had a local version of a clustered multi-spired *śekharī śikhara* with *latinā* spirelets.[21] At both Mari-Indus and Malot in the 10th century, therefore - almost as a kind of architectural question and response - Punjabi architects have knowledgeably "marked" their temples as original, aware of Kashmir's formulations, indeed, but consciously and creatively of their own region, the Punjab.

FOOT - NOTES

1. An earlier version of this essay, here expanded to document the temple at Mari-Indus, was written at the request of its editor, Shabhaz Khan, Director of Archaeology and Museums, Punjab, for the *Journal of Punjab History and Archaeology*, Lahore (in press).
2. James Abbott, "Remains of Greek Sculpture in Potowar," *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal* vol. 18, 1849, pp. 131-137. This visit is noted both by Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India Report for the Year 1872-73*, vol. V, Calcutta, 1875, p. 88n, and in the Punjab Gazetteer. Abbott poignantly reported, p. 134, that "I write at great disadvantage so many hundreds of miles from any books of reference, and with a memory almost unrefreshed by study during five and twenty years."
3. *Report* vol. V, pp. 85-90, pls. 25-27; Aurel Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances in North-western India and South-eastern Iran*, London, 1937.
4. A. Cunningham, *Report,* vol. V, pp. 87-88.
5. Michael W. Meister, "Temples Along the Indus," *Expedition, The Magazine of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology*, vol. 38, no. 3, 1996, pp. 41-54.



Line Drawing No. 3 : Nandana Fort, axonometric drawing of temple, c. 1000 A.D.



Line Drawing No. 4 : Mari-Indus, across form Kalabagh on the eastern bank of the Indus river, temple. C, ground plan, c. 10th century A.D.

6. A. Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India Report of a Tour in the Punjab in 1978-79,* vol. XIV, Calcutta, 1882; *Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, Frontier Circle, 1920-21; Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report,* 1920-21, pp. 6-7; 1921-22, pl. 26.

7. A. Cunningham, *loc. cit.;* James Burgess, *The Ancient Monuments, Temples and Sculptures of India,* pt. II, London, 1897, p. 28, pls. 237-241; Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art,* New York, 1927, p. 143, fig. 274; Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Periods),* 3rd revised ed., Bombay, 1959, p. 161. Coomaraswamy, p. 108 mistakenly identifies Malot as built of brick and dates the temple to the eighth century; Brown dates it to the ninth. See also Krishna Deva's comments -- in his chapter on Kashmir -- in Michael W. Meister, M.A. Dhaky, Krishna Deva, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (hereafter *E.I.T.A.*), vol. II, pt. 1, *North India, Foundations of North Indian Style,* Princeton, N.J., 1988, pp. 391-393.

8. J. Burgess, p. 28 and pls. 237-241, 260-266. For the temple at Gop, see *E.I.T.A.* II.2, pp. 177-179.

9. A. Cunningham, *Report,* vol. XIV, p. 27.

10. Anand K. Coomaraswamy, pp. 108, 143.

11. Michael W. Meister, "Temples Along the Indus," Figs. 8, 10.

12. Percy Brown, p. 161.

13. James C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent,* New York, 1986, pp. 197-198.

14. *Oriental Art,* new series, vol. 5, pp. 61-69.

15. London, 1985, pp. 29-30. See also Kamil Khan Mumtaz and Siddiq-a-Akbar, eds., *Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*, Lahore, 1989

16. *Report,* Vol. V, p.87.

17. Michael W. Meister, "De - and Reconstructing the Indian Temple," *Art Journal,* vol. 49, 1990, pp. 395-400.

18. Michael W. Meister, "Temples Along the Indus."

19. Michael W. Meister, "Temples Along the Indus," Figs. 19, 20.

20. Only the now ruinous and remade structure at the grove of Shivganga nearby also seems perhaps to have had a pyramidal roof (see also Abbott's report for his visit to this site).

21. Michael W. Meister, "Temples Along the Indus," Fig. E.

Courtesy Figs. 4,5:- Abbott, Remains of an Ancient Temple at Malot, Punjab, 1849, pls. II & VI, Fig. 8, Drawing by Hasina Chaudhury.

7

A FEW NEWLY REPORTED POST-GUPTA STONE TEMPLES OF UTTARANCHALA HIMALAYAS AND NORTH VINDHYAS

Dr. Rakesh Tewari

Numerous post Gupta temples are known from the Uttaranchala Himalayas and north Vindhyas. Their architectural features have been studied in detail and a number of scholarly publications based on these studies are brought to light. Yet the exploration of all the temples and their studies are far from completion. More and more hitherto unknown temples are being located during the recent explorations carried in these areas. Their detailed descriptions are incorporated in the respective reports published from time to time. This paper intends to draw the attention of the scholars towards a few recently reported important temples, which have given new dimensions to the studies of temple architecture.

The temples to be discussed herein, comprising *Ṇāgar rekhā śikhara* and *Valabhī śikhara,* are located in district Chamoli of Uttaranchala Himalayas, and districts Banda and Mirzapur in north Vindhyas (see map). The temples (Figs. 6, 7) of dist. **Chamoli** are situated on the left bank of the Dhauli Gaṅgā river, at a distance of about 15 km. north east to Joshimath, at an altitude of about 3000 m. above MS (Lat. 30°29^{1} 21^{11} N. Long 79°38^{1} 07^{11} E.) in a famous *tīrtha* (sacred place) called *Tapovan (Tapoban)*. It's surroundings, consisting deep valley, high snow covered peaks and green vegetation in the background along with a village, look very attractive. It was explored during the month of August 1996 (Tewari, *et. al.* 1997: pp. 157-167, Pls. 79-83). The *pūrvābhimukha* (east faced) main temple, of this group of temples, is called *Gaurjā Devī mandir*. The *talachanda yojanā* (ground plan) of this temple comprises a simple *āyatākāra* (rectangular) *garbhagṛha* and an *antarāla* or *kapilī*. The external and internal measurments of the *garbhagṛha* are about 2.60 x 2.00 m. and 1.50 x 1.50 m. respectively. The external and internal measurements of *antarāla* are about 0.45 x 1.88 m. and 0.95 x 0.88 m.

The *prāsāda-pītha* of the temple is made of two simple *bhiṭṭas*. Further, the *ūrdhvachanda yojanā* (elevation) comprises the *vedībandha* composed of four plain *paṭṭikās*. The *vedībandha* is surmounted by a plain *jaṅghā*. Two *kapotapālīs* separated by a plain *antarpatra* are provided between the *jaṅghā* and *śikhara*. The upper portion of the *śikhara* is reconstructed. The *skandhavedi* above the afosresaid *kapotpālīs* is intact, which clearly shows that originally a *Valabhī* would have been placed over it. Total elevation of the temple up to the *skandhavedī* is about 3.35 m.

The *śukanāsa* placed over the *antarāla* is composed of a *candraśālā*. The central circle of the *candraśālā* comprises a *bhadra-mukha*.

The *pūrvābhimukha praveśadvāra* (entrance door) of the *garbhagṛha* and *antarāla* are plain. The *vitāna* of the *garbhagṛha* is also plain. A magnificent image of *Mahiṣamardini Durgā* (Fig. 8) made of typical green stone of the concerned area, is seen installed on a *pīṭhikā* constructed along the western inner wall of the *garbhagṛha*. The artistic depiction and expression of the goddess are commendable. On the basis of stylistic features of this image as well as of the *Gaurjā Devī mandir* this temple may be dated to c. eighth century A.D.

Three votive temples (*taruṇālayas*) with *Valabhī śikhara* are constructed to the south of *Gaurjā Devi Mandira*. All of them are *uttarābhimukha* (north faced). Their heights vary between about 1.50 to 2.00 m.

The maximum and minimum external and internal measurements of the *garbhagṛha* are 68 x 92 cm. and 45 x 95 cm. Their *ūrdhvachanda yojanā* comprises *vedībandha* composed of *khur,* plain *antarpatra* and a plain *paṭṭī,* plain *jaṅghā* surmounted by *skandhavedī* and *Valabhī śikhara*. Besides above, two more votive temples are presents to the west of the main temple, first of them bears a *Phaṁsanā śikhara,* while the superstructure of the second is dilapidated. However, the *talachanda yojanā* of the later indicates that it would have comprised a Valabhī śikhara. The measurements and *ūrdhvachanda yojanā* of these temples up to the *jaṅghā bhāga* are almost similar to that of southern *taruṇālayas*. At present the *garbhagṛhas* of all the *taruṇālayas* are devoid of any image.

It may be observed here that though a number of *Valabhī* temples are known from different sites of Uttaranchala Himalayas as well as from other areas of north India, to the best of my knowledge except the Gaurjā Devī group of temples, there is no other example where *mūla mandira* along with most of the temples of the concerned group are of *Valabhi* type.

The temple, that of dist. **Banda** is located in the famous fort of *Kālañjar* (Lat. 24° 59^{1} 55^{11} N.; Long. 80° 29^{1} E). The author, while returning after a *darśana of Nīlkanṭheśvara Mahādeva* and one of the largest rock cut images of *Gajāntaka-Andhakāntaka Śiva,* noticed this temple in the month of Sept. 1995 (Tewari 1997 : *op.cit*; Tewari, 1999: 69-88). This temple (Fig. 9, 10) is carved out on a rock comprising a series of complete and incomplete temples, to the left to the lower stairs leading to the above temples. A simple *āyatākāra garbhagṛha* and an *antarāla* are provided in its *talachanda yojanā*. Internal measurement of the *garbhagṛha* is approximately 3.00 x 2.30 m. The elevation of the temple is roughly about 4.00 m. The details of elevation are, however, apparent only from the *sammukha pārśva* (front side). The lower portion of the internal *antarāla* bears an image of multi-headed *Śiva*. While it's middle left portion consists of an *eka mukha Śivaliṅga*. These images and carvings appear to be later additions, made after the completion of the temple. A broad *paṭṭikā* above the *antarāla* comprises a few more carved motifs such as a *Śivaliṅga* being worshipped by the devotees on its left and right *pārśvas*. The *śukanāsa* is plain and incomplete. The *śikhara* is separated from the *jaṅghā bhāga* by a plain *paṭṭikā* shown in between two narrow *antarpatras*. The longer *pārśva* of the *skandhavedī* of the *śikhara* is decorated with a row of four *rathikās* crowned by simple *udagamas,* which look like side view of the *Valabhī* shrines. Partly depicted barrel shaped plain *Valabhī* is rested over the *skandhavedī*. At present the *garbhagṛha* of this temple is devoid of any image. On the basis of stylistic considerations this temple may be placed in ninth century A.D.

Besides the temple of Kālañjar, other *Valabhī* temples of north Vindhyas and Gaṅgā valley are known from Gwalior (*Telī kā mandir,* and *Valabhī mandira,* Naresar), *Mathura (*village Daulata*),* Fatehpur (Sarhan Bujurga), Mirzapur (village Dohar and Chunar) and Varanasi (Bharat Kala Bhavan). The *Valabhī* temples of Gwalior are built of stone blocks. Those of Mathura, Mirzapura and Varanasi are monolothic votive temples. The *śikhara* of the temple, located to the left to the eastern gate of the Chunar fort, is reconstructed. The temple of Fatehpur is made of bricks. The *Valabhī* temples known from the other areas of the north India may also be placed broadly under the above types. Therefore, the rock - cut *Valabhī* temple of Kālañjar is a unique example of its type.

The temples of Mirzapur are located in the Halia development block of tehsil Lalganj on the left bank of the river Adha or Adawa in the villages Bardihia khurd and Batuahan respectively (Tewari, *et. al.* 1999 : 168-173). The first of them (Fig. 11) is in the eastern part of the village (Lat. 24^0 50^I 50^{II} N; Long. 82^0 16^I 4^{II} E). This *pūrvābhimukha* temple is based over a low *jagatī* composed of two *bhiṭṭās*. It's *talachanda yojanā* comprises a square *garbhagṛha* and a *kapilī*. The *ūrdhvachanda yojanā* of this temple consists of *vedībandha, jaṅghā* and *rekhā śikhara*.

The *vedībandha, triratha* on plan, is composed of *khura, kumbha, kalaśa* and *kapotapālī*. The *jaṅghā bhāga* also *triratha* on plan, contains a *rathikā* framed by ornate pilasters on all the three *bhadras*, are decorated with different sacred motifs such as *ghaṭapallava* and *kīrttimukha*. While a *kinnar-mithuna* and *kīrtimukha* are shown in the middle of a broad *paṭṭikā* surmounting the above mentioned pilasters. Either *pārśvas* of this *paṭṭikā* bear *puṣpa paṭṭi* motif. The *rathikās* of the north *bhadra* comprise an image of *sthāṇaka samabhaṅga Pārvatī*. Her head and hands below the wrist are broken. A *siṁha* (lion) and a *mṛga* (deer) are seated to her either lower sides. Two handed *sthānaka Sūrya* image is placed in the western *rathikā*. His usual attire, i.e. *kirīṭ amukuṭa, kuṇḍala, kaṇṭhahāra, colaka, avyāṅga, udarbandha, upānah* and *uttarīya* are apparent. He is holding a *padma* (lotus flower) in each of his hands. The respective attendants are standing on his either lower side. A *daṇḍa* is seen in the right hand of the *Daṇḍa* while a pen and an inkpot may be noticed in the hands, of *Piṅgala*. The attire of the attendants is similar to that of *Sūrya*.

The *rathikā* of the southern *bhadra* harbours the image of four handed *Ganeśa* seated in *lalitāsana*. The elephant-headed deity is holding rosary in his right hand, a *modaka* in the upper right hand, a *mūlaka*-radish, in the lower raised left hand and a sweet-pot in the corresponding left hand. He is decorated with his usual ornaments such as *mukuṭa, ekāvalī, kaṅkaṇa sarpa yajñopavīta,* etc. The pedestal comprises brick or stone block pattern.

A broad ornate *paṭṭikā* decorated with a couple of *haṁsas* on the north and south *bhadras* surmounts the *jaṅghā*. Its north *pratibhadra* bears a *haṁsa* figure with foliated tail. While a *makara* and human figure with foliated posterior are depicted on either *pārśvas* of the *pratibhadras* of the western *paṭṭikā*. The *haṁsa* depicted on the southern *pratibhadras* holds a *mālā* with his beak. The *vedībandha* is consisting of a *kapotapālī* with eight *tulās* (bosses) on either side, which are covered with a layer of a moss. The *kīrttimukha* and other faded motifs are seen on the front side of the *tulās*.

The *varaṇḍikā* is surmounted by a *triratha Latina śikhara* of *Nāgar* style. Its *karṇas* comprise two *bhūmi āmalakas,* while the *bhadras* and *pratibhadras* are decorated with small *candraśālās*. The *āmalaka* lying near the temple may be identified with that which would have been placed over the *śikhara*.

The *pūrvābhimukha praveśadvāra* of the temple is about 1.07 m. broad and about 1.39 m. high. It consists of four *śākhās,* i.e. *patra, nāga, śrī vṛksā* and *patra śākhā*. The termination points of the narrow band of the *nāga-śākhā* comprise the busts of the *nāgas* with folded hands forming a canopy surmounting over the images of hte respective river goddesses depicted on the *pedyas*. The river goddesses, i.e. *Gaṅgā* and *Yamunā* are standing in *tribhaṅga mudrā*. Their approximate measurements are 39x26 cm. A *chatradhāriṇī* and a *dvārapāla* are shown on their sides. While *māṅgalya vihagas* are seen flying over them. The tails of the *nāgas* are held in the respective hands of the *garuḍa* shown on the *lalāṭabimba*. The *uttaraaṅga* is composed of the aforesaid *śākhās* surmounted by a *tulasaṅgraha* of ten bosses.

The *śukanāsa* over the *kapilī* is placed above a plain broad *paṭṭikā* and an *antarpatra* with two recesses on *karṇa*. A *Śaivite* image seated in *lalitāsana* and holding *triśūla* is shown within its *candraśālā*. This image is highly weathered and covered with a layer of moss. The outer lining of the *candraśālā* is decorated with a string of beads.

The *garbhagṛha,* originally square, presently measures 1.35 x 1.31 m. The internal height, from the floor of the *garbhagṛha* up to the *vitāna* is about 1.30 m. The internal and external measurements of the *kapilī* are 1.30m x 35.5 cm. and 1.66 x 43.5 m. The *garbhagṛha* is presently devoid of any image. Total elevation of the temple is roughly over 3.25 m. On the basis of the stylistic considerations this temple may be placed in c. eighth century A.D.

Besides the temple described above, the remains of a few more contemporary and later temples and sculptures are scattered over the site, which clearly indicate that a group of post Gupta stone temples once existed here.

The only existing temple (Figs. 12, 13) of the *Batauan* or *Batohan* group of temples situated in the eastern part of the village (Lat. $24^0 51^1 3^{11}$ N; Long. $82^0 20^1$ E.) is similar to that of

Bardiha khurd in plan and elevation. However, it's *antarāla,* doorjambs and *śukanāsa* are not present on their place. This temple is based on a low *jagatī* composed of two *bhiṭṭas*. The *dviaṅga* or *triratha vedībandha* is composed of *khura, kumbha, kalaśa, antarpatra* and *kapota* mouldings.

The *triratha jaṅghā* comprises a *rathikā* on all the three *pārśvas*. Ornate pilasters on either side frame the *rathikās*. The pilasters are decorated with several motifs, such as *ghaṭapallava, maṇibandha, ardhapadma* and *kīrtimukha*. The images of *Pārvatī, Sūrya* and *Gaṇeśa* are shown in these *rathikās* in order of north to south respectively. The *paṭṭikā* surmounting the images of *Pārvatī* and *Sūrya* bears the depiction of *tāḍa-patra* motif while that placed over the image of south *rathikā* is decorated with *kīrtimukha*. The ornaments, postures of the hands, attributes and attendants of the deities are comparable to those of Bardiha khurd.

The *karṇas* of the *pratibhadras* comprise pilasters decorated with *ghaṭapallava, kīrttimukha* and *ardhapadma, ghaṭapallava* and *kīrttiṁukha* motifs in upward order. Howerver, the western *karṇas* of the north and south *jaṅghā* are plain. It shows that the decoration of the temple could not be completed due to unavoidable circumstances.

The *varaṇḍikā* is composed of a recess, a *kapotapālī* decorated with *candraśālā* motif, plain *tulā saṅgraha* and an upper *kapotapālī*. *Dvibhūma rekhā śikhara of Nāgar* style surmounts the *varaṇḍikā*. Its *madhya latā* is decorated with small *candraśālās*. An *āmalaka* placed over the *candrikā* is seen on the top of the *śikhara*.

The internal measurement of the *garbhagṛha* of the temple is about 1.45 x 1.45 m. Approximate height of the temple is over 3.25 m. The heights of the *vedībandha, jaṅghā* and *śikhara* are about 50 cm, 1.04 m. and 1.74 m respectively. An image of *Sūrya,* much later than the temple, is presently installed in the *garbhagṛha* by the villagers. On the basis of comparative considerations this temple may also be placed in c. eighth century A.D.

It may be noted that the remains of a number of post Gupta stone temples and sculptures of various deities, besides the plans of a stone temple and an earlier brick structure are apparent at the site. Details of these antiquities are described elsewhere (Tewari, *et. al.*, 1999 : *op.cit.*).

It may be noted herein that the remains of numerous stone temples have come to light during the extensive explorations conducted in the last two decades, from the districts of Sonbhadra (Tewari, *et.al.*, 1995 : 55-131) and Mirzapur (Tewari, *et.al., 1999, op.cit.*). However, almost intact temples of Bardiha Khurd and Batauan are the only known examples comprising *Latina rekhā śikhar* from this area. Though, the stone temple of Bharahari (Tewari, *et.al., 1995:64 pls. 33, 34*) located to the south of the river Son in district Sonbhadra is contemporary to those under discussion, but it bears a *Phāṁasana śikhara*.

Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to his colleagues Sri Ram Gopal Misra, Photographer and Sri Ramji, Assistant Surveyor for the photographs and a map to illustrate this article.

FOOT - NOTES

1. Rakesh, Tewari, G.C. Singh, R.K. Srivastava, Archaeological Explorations n Robertsganj Tehsil, District Sonbhadra, U.P. *Prāgdhārā* No. 5, Journal of the U.P. State Archaeological Organization, 1995 Lucknow, pp. 55-131.
2. Rakesh, Tewari and Budhi Prakash Badoni, Tapovana sthit Valabhī mandiron kā mahātmya (Hindi), *Prāgdhārā,* no. 7, 1997 pp. 157-165.
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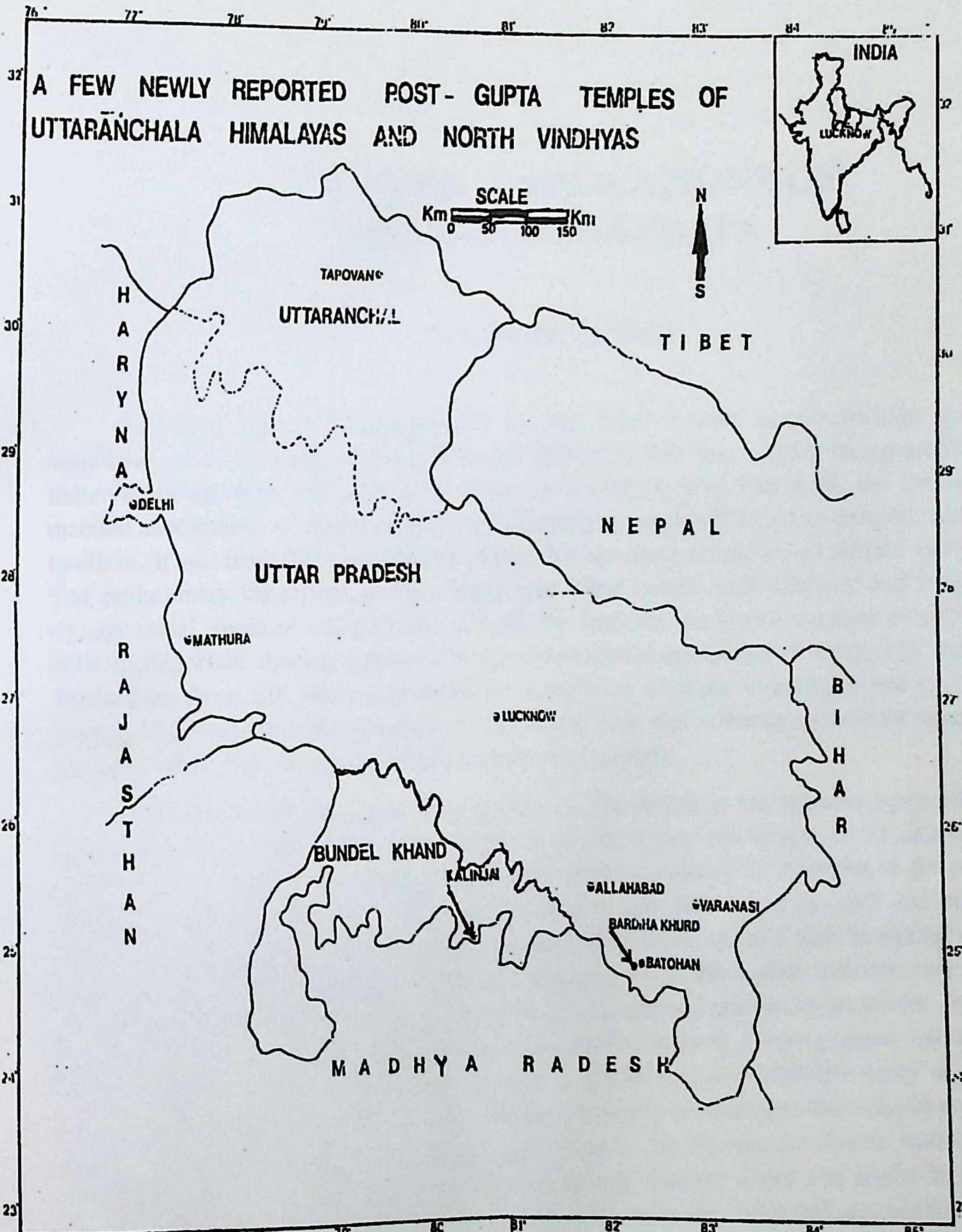
4. Rakesh, Tewari, Valabhi style temples of north India, *Bulletin of Museums & Archaeology*, no. 51-52, 1999, pp. 69-88.


A FEW NEWLY REPORTED POST- GUPTA TEMPLES OF UTTARĀNCHALA HIMALAYAS AND NORTH VINDHYAS
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RAJASTHAN
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BIHAR
BUNDEL KHAND
KALINJAR
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8

AESTHETIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE RAṄGAMAṆḌAPA

Prof. Harsha V. Dehejia

The fully evolved Hindu temple is the final result of many transformations, spread over millennia, and is a coming together of many influences that have shaped sacred architecture in India. While an exact date cannot be given when temples were first built, the *Dharmasūtras*, mention *devāyatana,* or abode of gods, which can be considered the proto-temples in the Indian tradition. It was from these simple beginnings that the magnificent Indian temple was to evolve. The evolutionary influences on the temple have been mainly both aesthetic and religious, but equally social, regional and political as well. For instance, the entire question of patronage has been an important shaping influence in the construction and design of temples in India. To an aesthetician these and other aspects of the temple are of some importance but not of central interest. What engages his attention is the architecture that contains the sacred space, and its aesthetic rather than theological and religious implications.

To the *viṣiṣṭādvaitin,* and quite rightly so, the temple is the ultimate space where every aspect of *bhakti* unfolds, from the many rituals centred around the images, to the celebrations and festivals in and around the temple, and equally also the commercial activities in the precincts of the temple. To the *bhakta* therefore the temple is a complete world by itself and becomes the centre of his universe. While not denying the *bhakti* tradition, and also accepting that *bhakti* aesthetics is an important and religiously vibrant part of the Indian tradition, we shall leave behind the *bhakta* and follow the progress of the secular and non-sectarian *rasiks,* the seeker of aesthetic experience and even more, that of the *alaṁkāraśāstrī,* whose greatest interest is in the didactic study of aesthetic experience of how a serious and contemplative study of art leads to perfect or ultimate knowledge. The *alaṁkāraśāsrtī* firmly believes that there can be no experience higher than aesthetic experience and he subscribes to the Upaniṣadic dictum *rasovaisah rasam hyevayaṁ labdhvā ānandī bhavati,* He is *rasa* having obtained which one attains bliss.[1] We have the backing of the Indian aesthetic tradition when we make the claim that *rasa* for the aesthetician is an exalted state and is the corner stone of a transcendent experience arising out of an art object, and that *rasānanda* is the twin brother of *brahmānanda*. We do not want to isolate the *rasika,* from other seekers of knowledge, for we do admit that a *bhakta* can also be a *rasiks,* but equally we assert that a *rasika* and *alaṁkāraśāstrī* need not be a *bhakta*. The Indian aesthetic tradition upholds the non-sectarian, and autonomous *rasika* and *alaṁkāraśāstrī,* the seeker of higher knowledge through art, who functions independently, while not being tied to the *sampradāyas*. We shall focus on the observations and experiences of an *alaṁkāraśāstrī,* and the *rasika* as he enters the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* of the temple.

There are several aspects of the temple architecture that arrests the attention of an aesthetician, but one in particular is the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* sometimes also called the *sabhāmaṇḍapa,* or the theatre of the temple. A number of *maṇḍapas* have been described; thus there is the *sabhāmaṇḍapa,* the *nāṭyamaṇḍapa* and the *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa,* but it is chiefly the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* where devotees gather, pause and partake of the splendours of this space before entering the *garbhagṛha*. The *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is the most ornate part of the temple and it is here that the quintessence of temple culture, of music and dance, unfolds. The *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* or the festival hall, usually but not always, not only occupies an intermediate position between the entrance and the sanctum of the temple, but as Kramrisch notes the "superstructures of the (*raṅga*) *maṇḍapas* prepare and defer the climax of the *śikhara* of the *prāsāda.*[2] We are justified in inferring, on behalf of the *rasika,* that the preparation and the climax of an experience inside the temple are equally aesthetic as religious. She further notes that in the early temples "the *maṇḍapa* was a broad porch of the *prasāda*... Within the tenth century, however, the *maṇḍapa* had become part of the temple."[3] The actual size and situation of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* may vary with each individual temple and there are many architectural styles that have been used, but what arrests our aesthetic attention are certain features of its architecture, features that make it stand out from the rest of the temple.

One very obvious but very important feature of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is that it occupies an intermediate step in the *āgamana,* or the west to east progress of the *rasika,* from the world of commerce of the outside world, to the world of beauty, stillness and realisation inside the *garbhagṛha*. It is, as it were, the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* represents the midpoint between the immediate and the ultimate, the finite and the infinite, the provisional and the final, the initial and the ultimate stage of the knowledge that unfolds within the temple. And because of its intermediate position, the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* enables us to understand the dynamics of the aesthetic experience as it evolves between the preparation and onset of the experience to its culmination in aesthetic bliss.

The *rasika's* journey begins in the world outside the temple, a world of commerce and clamour, of a world caught up in itself, a world too busy to engage in questions metaphysical or aesthetic, a world that is totally immersed in the mundane and the material, where the primary concern is the primacy of *saṁsāra* and not *mokṣa,* where hedonistic pleasures take precedence over bliss, where matters earthly are too pressing for any celestial concerns. However, there are hints in the precincts of the temple, in the world of commerce outside the temple, that a different and higher world, a world of aesthetic rapture, awaits the *rasika* once he enters the temple, hints such as the flowers and other *pūjā* ingredients that are are sold by vendors, the god men and panhandlers, the truly devout who prosrate themselves even before they have entered the temple, offering strong hints that a new world awaits him within the temple. The would be *raskia* has a choice at this stage, either to return to this world of commerce or embark on an aesthetic *āgamana* or adventure that awaits him within the temple.

Having left the everyday world, and opted to undertake an aesthetic experience, the *rasika* first encounters the *dhvajastambha* (Fig.14) or the flag post of the temple, which is an early reminder of the Vedic *stambha* and its epistemological dualistic implications. The door of the temple is the next major feature to arrest his attention (Fig.15) and which reminds him that for the *āgamana* to proceed there have to be initial purificatory preparations. The river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā that guard the door of the temple, and the ritual tank in which the devout bathe which are near the entrance of the temple, are timely reminders that an aesthete must not only have the necessary *śikṣa* or training and *saṅkalpa* or commitment before the aesthetic mission is undertaken, but more importantly cleanse himself intellectually. This intellectual cleansing is the *rasikas's* disengagement from his personal ego, an ego burdened by concepts, and his *tanmayibhāva* or total undistracted commitment to the experience that lies ahead. The parallels between the *bhakta* and the *rasika* are obvious, for the *bhakta's* cleansing, besides a ritual bath, is also to ensure that he is not lacking in *śraddhā* or faith. The *Gaṇeśa* image, which the *rasika* encounters, even before stepping inside the temple, is a bold reminder that there may be obstacles which must be overcome, for after all Gaṇeśa is *vighneśvara*. The *navagrahas* on the lintel of the door, are a further reminder that the planets must assure that the conditions are right to undertake a serious and deliberate aesthetic experience. The *rasika* has been suitably warned of the seriousness of the experience that lies ahead and of the potential risks and obstacles in his path. These are reminders to the *rasikas,* that he is about to undertake a contemplative and deliberate aesthetic experience, and not just a passing, hedonistic and superficial art encounter.

Having corssed the door and entered the temple, the *rasika* finds himself in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* where the ambience is richly sensuous and distinctly different. This is the festival hall or the theatre of the temple and he is immediately struck by the many pillars, the *madanikās* and *yakṣīs,* the *kinnaras, the surasundarīs* and celestial and human dancers that adorn the architecture of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* in every niche and corner (Figs.16-18). While the stone floor of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is simple and generally unadorned the ceiling on the other hand is ornate and features a variety of images: those of celestial dancers and musicians, the *dikpālas,* and other divine and semidivine figures. The ambience in this space is distinctively festive and joyous, for this is the theatre of the temple and in its exalted space the mind is led into a state of exultation, wonder, excitement and amazement. This is the space where enjoyment and sensual enrichment is the watchword, for from every niche and corner of the *rangamaṇḍapa,* there is a profusion of joyous images, images not of the cult figure, that await the *rasika* in the *garbhagrha,* but of festivity and rejoicing, of dance and music. In this charmed space the *rasika* must maintain an epistemic distance and duality, a duality between the consummate *rasika* and the sensually rich art objects that surround him, like the amorous duality between Śiva and Pārvatī in their dalliance in

Kailāśa, and equally the duality between the lover and the beloved. This is what the pillars of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* seem to point.

Pillars have an ancient tradition in Indian art and thought, and can be traced to the *yūpa* of the Vedas, the *jarjara* of the *Nāṭyaśaśtra* and the *dhvaja* or the flag post of the *āgamas*. It was Prajāpati who with the aid of a pillar created the first duality between heaven and earth, for without this duality there could bo no creation, and without this duality there would be a chaotic void, where there could neither be sensual enjoyment nor aesthetic pleasure, nor life itself. It is the distance, separation and duality that removes an epistemic voidness and provides the space for a subject-object transaction, as epitomised by the dialogue between Śiva and Pārvatī in the *āgamas*. Duality and separation is thus the basis of knowledge. For, the quintessence of aesthetic plasure, is the duality and separation between the enjoyer and what is to be enjoyed, the lover and the beloved. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* mentions the *jarjara* an a heavenly weapon of Indra, which protected the first drama, the *ādināṭya,* from the attacks of *asuras,* and without which the drama could not have proceeded. The text further describes in detail how the *jarjara* is to be fashioned.[4] The *Nāṭyaśāstra* further notes that Indra having planted the *jarara* on the stage, the gods were then invoked to take their place in the pillar. Brahmā occupied the top most portion, Śiva the second, Viṣṇu the third section, Kārttikeya the fourth and the great Nāgas (Śeṣa, Vāsukī and Takṣaka) the fifth. Thus, the very arrangement of the gods in the *jarjara,* made it analogous to the *arbor muṇḍī,* the cosmic tree, with the top in heaven and the roots reaching the underworld, standing firm, as it creates a semantic space and protects mankingd from chaos and voidness. And as the *rasika* cognises and understands these pillars in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* he visualises the gods embodied and residing in the pillar, and is wonderstruck by aesthetically radiant space that they have created in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa.*

Next, to attract the attention fo the *rasika* in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* are the variegated images of dancers and musicians. He sees *ḍholakas* and *mṛdaṅgas,* the *bāñsurī* and the *vīṇā, madanikās* and *suarasundarīs* (Fig.19) in a variety of sensually alluring poses, and very suggestively looking at themselves in a mirror. (Fig.20). A mirror is an important symbol of epistemic duality as it provides a duality when there is none. There are dancers in sculpturesque poses, and there are *kinnaras* in attendance. This aesthetic space as it were, resounds with their music, and reverberates with the footsteps of the dancers, and the mind of the *rasika* is lifted into a state of exultation and ecstasy.

And finally, the *rasika* cannot escape the *mithuna* figures that adorn the outer walls of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* in its junction with the *garbhagṛha.* (Fig. 21, 22). The placement of these *mithuna* figures, at the junction between the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* and the *garbhagṛha,* an area that is referred to as the *sandhisthāna,* is important. These erotic figures on the outside of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* once again emphasise that sensual enjoyment must come from the joyous coming together of the subject and the object, in an enchanted atmosphere of eesthetic duality.[5] Knowledge must precede aesthetic realization and experience and for knowledge to arise there has to be the separation, a duality of subject and object, the aesthete and the art object. The *mithuna* figures are a reminder that the movement from the epistemic duality of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* to the bliss of unity of the *garbhagṛha* is to be a biune unity, a coming together of two as in one, as a couple in sexual bliss. The *mithuna* figures are an assertion that there is to be no negation or loss of identity, no *māyā* or illusion, in the final consummation of the aesthetic experience. The *raṅgamaṇḍapa* also features joyous and romantic couples holding each other in their *āliṅgan,* embrace, images which further strengthen the concept of biune unity.

In one case from Pārśvanatha temple Khajurāho it is the figures of Kāma and Rati in *āliṅgana-pose* (Fig.23). Thus, the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* gives two strong and unmistakable hints: first, the importance of an initial aesthetic duality and second the need to elevate the mind to a state of exultation, wonder, ecstasy and excitement. This duality and the exultation like the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* itself are intermediate, preparatory steps in the ultimate aesthetic experience. Both of these features are in keeping with the *āgamic* epistemology systematised by Kashmir Śaivites. For the Kashmir Śaivites perfect knowledge of *śuddhajñāna,* can come only from the joyous affirmation of cognitive sensual knowledge or *savikalpajñāna,* which is a content-rich cognition, born out of the duality of the *rasika,* and the sensually rich images of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa*, a duality epitomised by the pillars. Kashmir Śaivites speak of *unmukta* or gazing outward in wonder and amazement. This wonder which is the essence of *śivatva* arises from his *śakti,* and therefore becomes the defining feature of a *rasika.*[6] For Abhinavagupta, Śiva is one who having initially manifested the diversity of the universe, gazes outwards and then leads it towards the ultimate reality of unity.[7]

The *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is the universe in microcosm, of a heaven and earth, separated by the pillars, and full of rich and joyous and variegated images. Self-awareness, according to Kashmir Śaivites, can only arise from a recognition of this duality, an epistemic process called *vimarśa* or *śakti*. It is this *vimarśa* that awakens a dormant and somnolent *puruṣa,* for as has been said "it is *śakti* that is the very *śivaness* of *Śiva*".[8]

It is in this duality of the aesthetic space that the mind is led into a state of excitemtnt and wonder. It is, as it were, the *rasika* is witnessing a thearte of magic and is wonderstruck by the sensually rich images that surround him. Sensual enrichment, and not sensual negation, is the watchword of the Kashmir Śaivites, and the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is the space where this occurs. As Utpaladeva sings "let my senses become full, pure, devoted and strong."[9] The *āgamas* state that it is the power of sensual involvement that leads to the expansion of the mind.[10] It is this state of wonder and excitement in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* that shatters the fetters of the individual ego, leads to an expansion of consciousness and becomes the basis of *yoga.*[11] It is in this state of excitement and wonder that the mind must dwell.[12] Without this preparatory excitement and exultation, this emotional enrichment and ecstasy that takes place in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* the mind cannot ultimately be led into its final stage of repose or *viśrānti,* a repose that comes with the *darśana,* realisation, of the image in the *garbhagṛha.*[13] The exultation that is generated in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is essential in the expansion of consciousness, a development of vital importance in aesthetic experience and eventually bringing that experience to fruition.

Both the architectural features of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* and the images of dance and music that are found in this space, are a vindication of the *āgamic,* rather than the Vedic-Vedantic world view, a view that support affirmation rather than negation of the world, and an epistemology that recognises the reality and dualities of the world, and makes sensual exultation an essential prerequisite to the ultimate *advaitic* realisation.

For the aesthete and the *alaṁkāraśāstrī* alike, the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* plays an important part. It is here that the senses are indulged and enriched, and the mind elevated to a state of excitement, it is here that musicians and dancers gather, it is here that the *madanikās* and *kinnaras* shine in their glory, it is here that the sounds of drum and music are heard, it is here that the multiplicity of the world is understood and affirmed, it is here that *śiva-śakti samarasya* takes place and consciousness expands from the particular to the universal, it is here that the *ānandatāṇḍava* is performed, it is here that the rich and joyous meaning of *śivatva* is understood, it is here in the delectable duality of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* that the *rasika* exclaims "I am Śiva, with the universe as my body and my consciousness full and blissful".[14]

While the charmed and sensuous space of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is a source of aesthetic delight to the prepared aesthete, providing as it does through its many and varied aesthetic pleasures, a feast of beautiful images, the temple as a whole and the *maṇḍapa* in particular, is a visual diagram of the epistemology of aesthetic experience. To one steeped in aesthetics it is not difficult to quickly reasise at what the erudite *śāstras* of aesthetics discourse in learned words, the temple expresses the same ideas visually, beautifully and without any words. From the east facing *praveśa* right up to the *garbhagṛha* underneath the *prāsāda,* with the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* occupying a central and important place in the middle, and every component of the temple standing in mute testimony, the temple is a visual and eloquent statement of the epistemic dynamics of a generic aesthetic experience. Step by step the temple, as it were, explains, how an aesthetic experience proceeds, right from the temple door which symbolises the preliminary intellectual commitment and preparation of the aesthete as he prepares to undertake an aesthetic experience, to the visually charged *raṅgamaṇḍadapa* which illustrates the penultimate step of exulting the senses and lifting the mind to a state of excitement through the delectation of the senses as he dallies with the art object, and then the *garbhagṛha* which shows how the aesthete finally brings the experience to a blissful and restful fruition. The temple for the skilled aesthete is a visual map of a generic aesthetic experience, the images and parts of the temple reinforcing the didatic *śastra* in turn finding reaffirmation in the visual delights of the temple. To the *rasika* and the *alaṁkārśāstrī* the temple, and in particular the *raṅgamaṇḍapa,* is a haven of joy, a celebration of aesthetic delights and a visual testament not only of aesthetic pleasure but of the epistemology of aesthetic experience as well.

FOOR-NOTES

1. *Taitirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7
2. S. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple.* Delhi, 1976, p. 217.
3. *The Hindu Temple,* p. 244.
4. *Nāṭyaśāstra,* XXIII, pp. 159-167.
5. Although *mithuna* figures are found elsewhere in the temple they are most abundant at the junction of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* and *garbhagṛha.*
6. *sa evam viśvam esitum jñatum kartum ca unmukho bhavan, śakti svabhāvah kathito. Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam,* Delhi, 1986.
7. *pūrva pajñataya viśvam abhyasa bhedatāh, abhedottara pajñatam niyate tam tumaha śivam. Īśvara Pratyabhijña Vimarśinī*, 1.2
8. *śaktihi savasya śivata.*

   Svantantrya Darpaṇa. The Mirror of Self Supremacy, Delhi, 1993.
9. *paripūrṇāni śuddhāni bhaktimanti śtirāṇi ca, bhavatpūjāvidhau nātha sādhanāni bhavatu*
   m *e*
   Sivastotrāvalī of Utpaladeva in *Śaiva Devotional Songs of Kashmir,* 17.43. Constatina Rhodes Bailly, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1987.
10. *yoginas tanmayatvena manorudhexs tadmata.*

    Vijñānabhairava, 73, Delhi, 1979.
11. *vismayo yoga bhumikah.Śiva Sūtras.*

    The Yoga of Supreme Identity, 1.12, Delhi, 1979.
12. *yatra yatra manas tuṣṭir, manas tatraiva dhārayet.*

    Vijñānabhairava, 74.
13. *kutuhale brahmasatta mayi dasa.*

    Vijñanabhairava, 118.
14. *aham eva viśvasarīram cidānandaghana śiva iti*

    Spanda Nirṇaya of Kṣemarāja in *The Yoga of Vibration and Divine Pulsation,* p.123, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1992.

9

THE ART OF TERRACOTTA IN SOUTH INDIA

Prof. Choodamani Nandagopal

The Terracotta drum beats (Fig.24)

The beats on the earthern pot is a manifestation of the courage of the craftsman of the by gone era and the application of the rhythm to a pattern of sensitive rendering by a drummer. These beats are echoed in the daily life of the rural folk, in the work of a master, in the environs of an industry and in almost everything that is made of the *pañcabhūtas,* the five primordial elements. The pot made of baked clay is the most simple and common utilitarian object for a villager. The process of transformation of mud into a pot and the use of pot for the purpose of music is a unique feature of Indian Civilization.

The motion of the potter's wheel depends on two aspects (Fig. 27). The dynamism of *puruṣa* is in the form of the motion of the wheel and the *prakṛti,* the innate tangibleness in the form of mud. The *agati* the stationary position comes into action, that is *gati* where the movement of the wheel is initiated from the centre to the circumference. With the fusion of the *agati* and *gati* and the *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* the momentum picks up. The *sthiti* that is the state of a momentum in a particular rhythmic circles allows the potter to give the required shape for the clay. *Sthiti* controlling mode between *gati* and *agati* is the state of transition. The potter skillfully takes the advantage of this transitional phase by pressing the mud with his nimble fingers dipped in water often and back on the clay, and the clay evolves into a round form. His mind, heart and hands fondly creates a unique object compiling *pañcabhūtas* in the form of material aspect.

This pot when used as a drum is the striking result of a process, where the unique transformation of primordial elements epitomised into an art form. The very substance of the terracotta drum is the earth - *pṛthvī,* the water - *jala* gives fluidity for creating the form, when it is baked in fire the *agni,* it gives a quality of integrity to mud as well as water, the hollowness of the pot is filled with air - the *vāyu* and the pot wholesomely looks at and placed in the space - the *ākāśa* for its useful rendering. This kind of philosophical dichotomy of our understanding is a common principle (a *sūtra*) for our potter to earn his livelyhood. But the beats created on this timeless and ageless symbol in terracotta is all empowering. Lord Śiva himself dances in ecstasy to the tantalising beats of this terracotta drum. His eternal dance echoed in the cosmic activities of the universe. In his mystic dance of creation, symbolising the perfect joy he controls, destroys and renews at his will. The terracotta drum with its few variations are observed here as one of the major accompaniment for rendering the rhythm to the cosmic dance of Śiva.

The pot-shaped terracotta drum, the opening covered with hide was known as *dardura* in ancient times and in present context is *ghaṭa*. An early Chalukyan sculpture from Virūpākṣa temple, Paṭṭaḍakal, depicts Śiva dancing on a large sized *apasmāra* for the beats of a terracotta drum, the *dardura*. *Trighaṭa* or *Tripuṣkara,* the three faced terracotta drum was played with high skill and technique. A very clear picture of three faced drum is seen as the accompaniment for dance of Śiva in a loose sculpture of Aihole. The figure of the drummer is more specific, as the structure of the drum, the placement and the seating position of the drummer is very clearly brought out. Another reference of a *Tripuṣkara* is in the Naṭarāja panel in the ceiling of Aghoreśvara Temple, Araluguppe, Karnataka of ninth century A.D. The drummer has just ended a syllable in accordance with the pose of the Lord of dance.

The five-faced drum, the *Pañcamukha Vādya,* known as *Kuḍamula* made of light wood has a pot-shaped, terracotta resonator. The original version of the *Pañcamukha Vādya* was a big size terracotta pot with five openings. The one such drum preserved in Madras Museum was played in the temple music. The five openings of the drum is named on the five faces of Śiva. The central one is the Sadyojāta and the peripheral are Iśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora and Vāmadeva. The terracotta drum uses very large in size and heavy and mounted on the wheeled carriage. This five faced drum is found in a panel in the Naṭarāja Temple, Chidambaram. All these terracotta drums were traditionally played to accompany the Tāṇḍava Nṛtya. *Mṛdaṅga* as the name suggests, was originally made of backed clay. The earliest smaller size of *mṛdaṅga,* the two-faced terracotta drum held horizontally, is noticed in the hands of *śivagaṇas* of Badami.

The terracotta drum is not just confined to antiquity as discussed earlier, but it continues as a living tradition in South Indian music, as '*ghaṭam*'. The mouth of the *ghaṭam* is narrow and not covered with a parchment unlike the *dardura, tripuṣkara, pañcamukha vādya* and *mṛdaṅga.* The *ghaṭam* takes its shape on potter's wheel by using special kind of clay found only in Panruti and Mana Madhurai in Tamil Nadu. The proportion of mixing of clay with iron filings is known to only those families of potters residing in these places. The clay pots are baked in consistent temperature. The *ghaṭams* made here are strong, durable and resonant. Like the bamboo flute, *ghaṭam* is made of single homogeneous material i.e. backed clay without having any detachable parts. It is an *upatala vādya,* a secondary rhythmic instrument.

The performer who plays on *ghaṭam* places the instrument on the lap and taps it with his wrists and all the fingers, gentler and forceful strokes are given at the neck, centre and bottom. The mouth of the pot is sometimes pressed against the stomach of the performer and resounding strokes are produced. When the recital reaches a climax of high tempo, the instrument is thrown up in the air and caught successively in consonance with rhythm. This terracotta musical instrument binds thousands of people at the time of recital. In fact the audience would be counting the beats and just longing to experience this awe-inspiring moment of the terracotta drum thrown up in the air.

The terracotta pot shaped drum is also used by rural folk in their concerts of folk music. The twelth century literate Harihar, the poineer of blank verse in Kannada literature, gives a vivid picture of a devotee dancing for lord Śiva in Kumbara Gundayyana Ragale. The potter Kumbara Gundayya used his pots as musical instrument to produce rhythm and dances spontaneously. Śiva was pleased to see such a dance of eternal devotion and was inspired by the drum beats and he too danced before him. Striking a unique pose of stepping with one foot the *pātāla* and with the other foot raised straight towards *Brahmāṇḍa* (the cosmic space) in great joy the lord of dance concorded the rhythm of pots played by Gundayya. The proto-type of this terracotta drum in Andhra Pradesh is known as '*Gummati*' (origniating from the resonating sound of '*Gum*') which is played in folk story-telling discourses popular as '*Burrakathā*'. All these references indicate, the way the pots were put to innovative use in producing sound and rhythm in enriching the life and sensibilities of the people in the South Indian states.

The Ritual use of Pots: (Fig.25):

The ritual of life binds on everyone from birth to death and links him with the whole of which his human presence is an emblem. The mother earth has a solomn role in the form of baked pots which is consecrated and propitiated in most of the rituals where the auspecious beginning is to be made. More than anything clay in India has a sociological basis. For worship if no image is available, a water pitcher does the duty and it is called the '*Maṅgalaghaṭa*' the good omen.

The marriage, *upanayana* and vedic rituals specify the number and size of the pots. The *navadhānyas* (nine types of cereals) are mixed with mud and filled in these pots and the mouties covered with lids for three days. The seedlings sprout and symbolize the concept of fertility. Even the posh area of the city has a shop where these pots are sold and it is in demand during such occasion. So also at the funeral. The *kartru,* who performs the rituals carry in front of the procession a pot containing the fire, symbolising the merger of the mortal body into *pañcabhūtas*. In present days also in Pangola a remote village in Kerala, pot moulded with breast like protuberance, a symbol of the Earth Mother, used in archaic vedic rituals. Such pots are found in the small museums and private collections of western coast of South India. *Kalaśa, kumbha* and *ghaṭa* originating from the ritualistic pots are the auspicious symbols of South Indian culture.

Terracotta Figurative Art:

Iidian states such as Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, North-Eastern states, and Madhya Pradesh have a very rich heritage of terracotta art where as the figurative terracotta art of South Indian states fall back with limitations. After a survery and study of the whole range of terracotta objects of South India, an effort is made here to bring them into four broad categories as they stand in the state of ageless and timelessness.

1. The excavated sites belonging to neolithic and early historical periods furnish greater varieties of pottery and objects made of metal, stone and stucco. The material culture of the cities, towns and settlements excavated in Brahmagiri, Maski, Chandravalli, Sannati, Vadagam, Madhavanagar, Arachimedu, Adichannallur (Tinnevelly district), Porkalam in Kerala and Talakadu, more recently provide some examples of Terracotta human and animal figures, beads of different sizes and utilitarian objects modelled to the desirable shapes and functions.

2. Apart from the evidences of terracotta art from the archaeological sites, the rural and tribal artisans operated to fulfill the religious and functional needs of the people, they also looked forward to use their skill in creating special terracotta objects.

3. In the present seenario terracotta is regarded as one of the prospective handicrafts of India. Efforts were made to revive the terracotta heritage of each region and today the utilitarian and decorative pieces made of terracotta and produced in several centres and cater to the taste of elite.

4. Some of the contemporary artists have taken to terracotta as a viable medium for their creative expression.

Terracotta Antiquitiy:

The oldest remains of Indian crafts that one can see and touch, belongs to the excavated areas. The figurines of remote antiquities can not be dated. These are identified as the symbol of fertility expressing vital energy. More sophisticated forms have come and gone, these simple handmodelled, pinched to the required size, still hold world attention because of their unique charm and distinctive style. Very few terracotta figures survive to this date from excavated sites. Sannati one of the important site of Sātavāhana period in Andhra-Karnataka region have few representations of fertility cult. The figures are hand made by modelling the clay to the desired shape. They are expressive and decorated with necklaces and other jewels. Another group of images are profusely jewelled and a parrot is found perching on the right arm of the damsel. Lady with parrot in stone and metal later takes to innovative compositions. A tiny hamlet near Sannati known as Kumbaruru was the guild of potters and they supplied fine terracotta images to the Sātavāhana region. Even during the last century this place produced fine terracotta jugs, peacocks and other animals. Today this place is insignificant and the potters only supply the earthern pots to near by villages.

Talakadu, a well known capital of Western Gaṅgas is situated about 60 km. to Mysore on the left bank of the river Kaveri. The recent excavations has yielded a good number of terracotta antiquities. This excavation is significant as it provides a very good key to the chronology of human history at Talakadu. Pottery of finer variety in red, black, brown and fine polished have been brought out. A good number of different size terracotta beads and sprouts of big size jugs are found. Unfortunately not even a single human figure in full form is found. The excavated objects include mutilated male and female figures, knobs, bulls and rams, a small round earthern tube, plam sized square, easy to handle blocks, wheels of to cart, incense stick stand with six holes, many oil lamps of different sizes and shapes are discovered. In the 9th layer of the excavated trench a terracotta plank on the foundry floor was discovered. It is identified by the archeologists as a sitting plank, it is made of rough gritty clay but well baked. In the 8th layer a square tray with raised edges is found and it is identified as an votive tank. In the early historic culture of South India such votive offerings were commonly found. In the 9th layer of the trench a kiln is also found.

With the available few terracotta objects, it is possible to assume that the terracotta art existed with certain limitations in southern states. But the figurative representing deities or religious personages show fine modelling and delightful lines. They are non-Aryan with the features like short nose, thick lips, round ovel shaped faces make us to think that the potter has apparently chosen people of his own stock in mind while moulding these figures. In historical times stone, metal, ivory, wood were the acceptable medias for the impressive kind of expression of the southern regions. Probably the reasons may be, the low quality material, the insignificant size and the fragile nature of terracottas are obvious defects of which they were hardly be considered as the viable media for the strong appeal and the nature of permanancy which the South Indians looked for. Thus is was not considered here as the major form of art.

Terracottas in Tribal and Folk Traditions:

South India is a region so richly endowed with layer upon layer of beliefs and customs, it is no wonder the small villages and tribal centres are the repository of the early traditions as well as living energy. The potters still retain a respect for the divine origin of their craft. Every day before the potter sets to work, his simple tools are given due veneration as gifts from god and prayers are offered for the hands to be guided by the Lord. Almost all potters of the villages, are adept in producing both utilitarian objects and the figures of deities, toys, oil lamps for the annual cycle of festivals and religious cremonies. The craftsman was the link between the monumental form of the great tradition, the rural gods and the tribal deties of forests and mountain. However diverse the forms and distorted the images are, the roots of the creative process lay in this artisan tradition. It was from this tradition that the great temples were built and the sculptures of Purāṇic gods found expression. It was the same tradition that produced the artefacts for the tribal and rural folk of this region (*Earthern Drum,* Pupul Jayakar, p. 17). The Nilgiri tribes are known for their terracotta human and animal figures. Even the lids of the pottery they modelled into figurative. One of the example from Govt Museum, Madras show the male human figure on a lid and a buffalo with an over emphasized horn raised naturally. Among these tribes, the figure of a buffalo represents male fertility. These pottery figurines are fertility symbols on burial urns. Few more modelled figures such as a female bust and a lid surmounted by leopard are also known. A howling dog figure discovered from folklore museum, Mysore is of small size. I may be a toy for the child. Another figure, a terracotta funerary urn from Government Museum, Madras has an exaggerated body sarcophagus with head of a ram. It comes from a tribal region of Tamilnadu.

The festivals of *Navarātri, Diwālī, Makara Saṅkarānti* and *Grāmadevatā* (deity of the village) are celebrated with great enthusiasm in almost all villages in South Indian states. The Chariot festivals of that region fall during these festivals. The craftsmen from near by villages bring traditional as well as innovative oil lamps, small size proto types of the village deities, and varieties of toys to these festival markets. The villagers make is a point to buy new sets of terracotta objects in every season. This promotes and motivates village craftsman to survive on his art. The age old tradition of exhibiting the dolls in every household during the *Daśaharā* festival cultivated in the children and adults, a habit of collecting the dolls. Every year the new set of dolls are added to the collection. These dolls in early times were specially drawn from the rural areas. These festivals in South India created a sense of appreciation among the people for figurative arts. Every house will be like a small museum, having the collections of few terracotta items.

Ayanar, Sasta, Kesavanandana are all the mighty male *grāmadevatās*, the village deity, of Tamilnadu, Kerala and Coorg respectively, They are considered as the legendary sons of Śiva and Viṣṇu in his form as Mohinī, who awakened the passion of Yogī Śiva. The most famous of the southern terracottas of folk traditions are the votive offerings of animals particularly horses to Ayanar in Tamilnadu. While passing through the winding roads of rural belt of Tamilnadu, one may see the of Ayanar shrines, particularly seized with amazement to encounter striking terracotta horses, known as 'kudurai'. The shrines to Ayanar, the beautiful sea-coloured one, are open to the sky. The monumental forms of clay horses, bulls and elephants signify the holy sites. The animals, cast long shadows and create a field of mystery and definance. The most ancient shrine is located in groves of trees near Namasamudram in Pudukottai. Thousands of terracotta animals are flanked through the path leading to this grove.

The villages of Pudukottai and Salem districts of Tamilnadu consider Ayanar as the guarding deity of the villages. The villagers think that Ayanar rides on the mighty terracotta horses (six meters high maximum), during the ride through the fields and forests driving away the evil spirits. The appearance of the horses give a feeling that they are ever alert to move. During the harvest festivals the villagers thank Ayanar by offering the legendary heroes such as Veeran, Karappan and Karthavaryan etc. These figures are very expressive with big mustaches and the potters take delight in distorting these figures. Some- times a gigantic male figure known as Munnadiyars stand erect with raised hands is regarded and respected by the villagers as the formidable protector of the Ayanar shrine. In some shrines several figures known as Kannimar, who are the virgins, are worshipped at the time of drought.

The legs and the hollow bodies of horses, bulls and elephants and also of other deities and figures are rounded on the potters wheel. The heads are separately hand-moulded by the potter and later attached to the body. The figures are decorated with clay trimmings in the form of bells, stylised florat motifs, beads, *kīrtimukhas* (grotesque faces). If the commissioned figures are very big in size, they are made on the sopt. The gigantic figures are made in component parts, fired, assembled and fired again. The faces and sometimes even the body are also coloured in red and yellow. When everything is set in place, life is given to the figure through the painting of the eyes by the potter who acts himself as the priest. The occasion is marked by animal sacrifice. Unlike potters elsewhere in India, the makers of these horses and other votive figures are the *Kuśavan,* who are accorded an elevated status, tracing an ancestry to the union between *Brāhmaṇa* and *Harijan* woman. Commissioned on an auspicious day to replace one or more of the every decaying effigies made by his predecessors, the potter is assisted by wife and children in making of the largest votive offerings. (*Arts and Crafts of India*, Nicholas Barnad, p.167).

Kaliyamman and Mariyamman are the most worshipped female *grāmadevatās* for warding off social evils in all parts of South India. In the place known as Mariyamman Koel in Tanjore district, at the annual festivals thousands of devotees offer minor gods and goddesses and animal figures of smaller sizes to Mariyamma. The craftsman look forward for profits during these festivals. In northern part of Karnataka, in village Soundatti, a cult of Yellammā is widely known. The terracotta face signifies Yellamma who is a *jogī,* a mendicant. The women carry these faces on their heads and walk the whole distance as a vow.

Terracotta Handicrafts (Fig. 26)

The skilled hand of the Indian craftsmen is one of our most important and yet most invisible resources. It is being perceived with concern and with a precise understanding of its values. Kamaladevi Chattopad yaya and Pupul Jayakar awakened the interest in the heritage of Indian handicrafts with their efforts. Due to the efforts of office of Commissioner for Handicrafts, many hesitant craftsmen and talented needy persons were motivated to take up terracotta handicraft as their profession. The stylised ritualistic animals, human figures, and utility objects made in terracotta media are well appreciated in cities and towns. The Technical Wing of Research and Training, Govt of India in handicrafts is situated in Bangalore. The centre provides training to develop tools, sophisticated technology, design innovative products, resource mobilisation, identifying alternative raw materials. As such many NGos have taken up the manufacturing, marketing of terracotta objects. The Regional Design centre of South India, situated in Bangalore organizes exhibitions, workshops, survey and other activities to promote this handicraft. Crafts council of India and Dakshini in Chennai, Crafts Council of Karnataka are the other organizations supported by Govt. of India to promote the terracotta craft.

The traditional centres such as Kudike Bevu, near Bangalore where the whole village is of potters and at particular months of the year they prepare their special items such as terracotta bell and oil lamps. They are a closed community and very difficult to catch hold of them. Most of the time they go outside their village doing different kinds of odd jobs. Karigiri, a small village near Chennai is another traditional centre, but the potters are aware of the market and demand for their products. A dozen potter families are engaged in producing glazed pottery and variety of utilitarian objects with Persian designs. The clay they use is so soft and plastic that highly intricate designs in various shapes can be easily thrown on the potters wheel, with beautiful cut-out or incised disigns. The other centre which take keen interest in promiting terracotta items are Ramanagaram, Clay Creations Kengeri, Jogardoddi, Mruchakatika, all near Bangalore manufacture innovative terracotta crafts. Ākār in Bangalore is specialised in terracotta jewellery. Inlay technique such as using white clay for highlighting purpose, etching the design on the surface, coils embossing on the smooth surface have been recently introduced in the terracotta. Mangalore tiles are famous for their quality, and in the coastal Karnataka the tile factories provide employment for large number. The tiles produced near Raichur is different from Mangalore, they are used for wall purpose and coated with mica and white clay to get the shining. Kodangalluru in Kannanur district in Kerala is known for its decorative pottery. In Pondicherry a terracotta workshop is established. Along with the craftsmen the contemporary artists like Antony d' Costa work here. The students of fine arts colleges of south spend few weeks working in this workshop.

The Design Centre is helping these centres to come out with fine pieces for export purpose such as the Tulasivrindavan, vases, containers, pot holders, pen stands, wall hangings, Gaṇeśa images, stylised Ayanar horses in small sizes, the bulls and elephants, decorative tiles. These are some of the items that fascinate the people in their traditional and modern forms.

Terracotta in Contemporary Arts:

The preparatory courses in Fine Arts Colleges train the students in clay modelling. This knowledge prompt them to work on the terracotta medium when they go for specialization in sculpture. The early stage of experimentation of form is always worked in this medium as the students are conscious of the cost factor of other material. Terracotta has always been considered a poor man's art mainly because its raw material, clay, is available free or at a nominal cost. The budding sculptors enjoy the vocabulary in terracotta art which is direct, intuitive and simple. Transformation is the uniqueness in terracotta art. The spontaneous impulses of the artists are effectively translated into terracotta images.

The famous South Indian artists such as Nandagopal, Janakiraman, Dhanapal, Paranukutti, Vasudev today known for more permanent media had initially worked in terracotta. The veteran artist and the prolific writer in Indian contemporary art K.G. Subramaniyan introduced the strength of appeal through terracotta murals. Motivated by his mural blocks many artists experimented innovative forms and designs giving a new dimension to terracotta art. Among the present artists John Devaraj makes hundereds of heads of different sizes and expressions and use them in performing media. N. Pushpamala's terracottas have made a special significance in contemporary world as she has chosen it as her media of expression. In the works of Pushpamala we find evidence of the trajectory of using the plibility of material and a sense of fragile existence. It can convey in a satarical witty mode which was earlier explored by K.G. Subramanitan. Her works enhance the scene of humour which however is tempered by a gentle empathy in her adolescent female figures, frequently suggestive of growing into adulthood (Indian Contemporary Art-Vadhera Art of Gallery, Delhi, p.56). C. Douglas from Cholamandalam mainly works on paper using mixed media. Fascinated by the natural vibrance of texture and colour C. Douglas uses terracotta powder directly on his paintings which gives him the required tactile effect.

Indian Terracotta thus is a great field of study but largely overlooked and by passed. It is only recently that an appreciation for terracotta art has come about. Today the South Indian sense of visual expression look at terracotta in terms of both craft and art. Art Museums, Craft Museums, the terracotta production centres, folk-lore museums and private collections are taking pride in preserving and promoting terracotta art. The creative works of unknown hands continue to stand as testimony for the indigenous aesthetic expression in terracotta art.

10

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF KERALA'S NUMISMATIC ART*

Prof. T.P. Sankarankutty Nair

Every hoard of coins bears the signature of its society. We aim at deciphering this signature so as to understand the society in real terms.[1] Every one knows that numismatic system itself had evolved from the traders. In a philological supposition *paṇa* (coins) is handled by *vaṇika* (trader) and this is a *paṇi* (work). The interaction of *paṇa, paṇi* and *vaṇika* brought about the evolution of Indian coinage.[2] But its acceptability is doubtful with regard to Kerala due to the non-availability of evidences, probably because, no serious research was made. This is true of coin art as well. Coins act as an important source for the study of history as vouchsafed in many cases. Out of 38 kings and two Queens of Indo-Greeks known from coins, only two are mentioned in Inscriptions and seven in literary sources.[3] Similarly out of about 50 kings with Śaka-Pahlava names, hardly more than a dozen names are known from sources other than coins. The history of the Kushāṇas would be incomplete if the numismatic testimony to their power and strength was removed.[4] Even the history of the Sātavāhanas, about whom different versions of the Purāṇas give different genealogical and chronological lists of kings, are known from coins alone. The king who was probably the first of line and after whom the dynasty was named Sātavāhana is known only from the coins, The struggles against the Śakas by the Sātavāhanas would neither be complete nor precise without the help of their coins.[5] But even a pioneer like Sir A Cunningham, out of 118 pages, devoted only ten page on South Indian Numismatical issues in his book on *Ancient Indian Coins*.[6]

Scholars of Kerala also are not focussing their attention to the study of coinage of Kerala. At the time of Indian Independence silver coins issued by the English East India Company from its mint at Talassery (Tellicherry) in 1799 and 1805 were the coins in common use.[7] These coins bore the letter "T" probably for Talassery where from it was minted. These coins were popular in Travancore and Cochin as well. These princely states also had their own coins. In Cochin, British India coins had been issued as the only currency on 14th June 1900.[8]

In 1876 the British Indian Government offered to strike coins; free of charge for the princely states if the states closed down their mints and sent the metal for coining to the English mints. This measure was launched to bring out uniformity. But states like Hyderabad and Travancore retained the right of coinage and regularly minted coins, till they merged with the Indian Republic.[9] Travancore coins in silver with *śaṅkha* (conch) within a wreath around *Tiruvithamkoor Ara Rupia* (1064 kollam era/1889 A.D.), was issued by Rāma Varma of Travancore in 1889. Only 34 out of more than 100 princely states preferred to mint coins in those days,[10] in a peculiar artistic style.

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* The article, as expected, does not discuss about the art-Editors.

During Portuguese (1498-1663 A.D.) and Dutch (1663-1795 A.D.) phases of Kerala History there were several types of *varahans* like *Parangi Varahan. Mahe Panam* of the French too was in good circulation all over the Malabar coast. These silver coins were minted at the Mahe settlement of the French East India Company. Coins in *Hijra Era* 35, 126, 161 etc, issued by Tipu Sultan too had been discovered from Kozhikode in 1960. The *Vira Rayan Panam* (both *Pazhaya Panam* and *Puthiya Panam*) of the Kolathiri *Rājās,* the *Anantanārāyan* and *Ananta Varahan* coins in gold of the Travancore *Rājās,* the *Puthan* of Cochin *Rājās* are all familiar coins known from many parts of Kerala.

W. Elliot has expressed the view that *Kaliyugarajan* or *kaliyugarayan Panam* was immensely popular in Kerala during the 9th and 13th century, side by side with the use of coins such as *Pon, Achu, Panam, Kasu, Azhakasu* etc. A collection of thirty one silver coins with the name of a Kerala King Vira Kerala Varma was discovered from Vaigaikulam village in the Sankarancoil taluk of Tirunelveli in 1944. The coin contains a symbol of an elephant although a scholar like N. Lakshinarayan Rao identified this as a crocodile. It is possible that this Vira Kerala is none other than the Vira Kerala of Cholapuram Inscription of 1127 A.D.[11]

Kerala numismatists are in deep debt to Dr. Parameswari Lal Gupta former Director, Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Nasik for his study—*The Early Coins from Kerala,* published by the Archaeology Department of the State of Kerala in 1965. The took contains the detailed study of the punch marked coins numbering about 218 discovered from Elikulamkara in Kottayam and Iyyal of Trissur in 1946. These coins now available in the Padmanābhapuram and Trissur Archaeology Museums are assigned to different dynasties.[12] The Iyyal hoard is particularly of considerable interest to us because of its artiste and aesthetic value.

It was on the 29th October 1945 that this hoard was found from the residence of Tharayil Karappan Sankaran of Chittilingad in the village of Iyyal in the Wadakkencherry taluk of Trissur. In this hoard only 12 gold and 105 silver coins were discovered. All the gold coins are Roman. The 34 silver coins are punch-marked coins and the remaining 71 are Roman *denarius*. Some of them are broken or are in mere fragments. The other hoard at Kottayam consisted of 184 silver punch marked coins. Of the two hoards of punch marked coins, only two coins are of unknown variety. The Iyyal hoard, small in size, is important for the reason that it is a place in between the ancient seaport towns of Tyndis and Muziris (Kodungallur)[13] The find of gold and silver Roman coins along with the other silver punch marked coins in the hoard, suggested that the Roman coins were not only imported to this country as bullion but the people accepted them as current coins.

The Roman coins in the Iyyal hoard cover a period of about 240 years i.e. B.C. 123 to A.D. 117. Among these 4 *denarii* belonged to the Republican period (123-86 B.C.), 12 *denarii* of Octavian period (44-31 B.C.), 36 *denarii* of Augustus, 4 *denarii* of Claudius (44-54 A.D.) and 5 *denarii* of Nero (54-68 A.D.). However, one fresh *aureus* was of Emperor Trajan (98-117 A.D.) According to P.L. Gupta the earliest one was of 39 B.C. It is possible that there was a continuous flow of gold and silver coins to this part at least till the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. The old view that the trade and flow of gold came to a stop by the time of the death of Nero (in 68 A.D.) is not acceptable in the light of the study of these coins. The close contact with Muziris (Cranganore) continued for at least a century after the death of Emperor Nero.[14] But the most unfortunate thing is that Dr. Gupta did not include this study in his *magnum opus, The coins*, published by the National Book Trust, reprinted in 1996 from the 1969 edition.

Nine gold Roman coins had been obtained from Panangad in Ernakulam. The archaic Latin letters and numbers take us to the period of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.). The Valluvally hoard of Ernakulam - of Roman gold - also took us to the period of Hadrian (117-38 A.D.) and Marcus Aurelius. It is a place nearer to Trippunithura, capital of the princely state of Cochin.[15] From Kodusseri in Angamali, another ancient town near Alwaye, a number of old coins had been discovered on the 14th April 1987. In contains about 783 punch marked coins of North India. In 1985, 272 punch marked coins were discovered from Maala in Trissur. The figures on these coins are of Roman style.

These coins of irregular shape and standard weight have symbols of fish, elephant, five leafed tree, umbrella, snake, sun, deer, bull, bow etc. The commercial importance of Angamaly and Maala have been established clearly as a result of these findings.[16] Three coins discovered from North Parur, near Tirukkulasekharapuram[17] and Thiruvanchikulam with bow, arrow and elephant punching, have been identified as Chera coins of the second Chera period (800-1124 A.D.).[18] Resemblance to the Darvidian sculptural art is noticeable here.

The historiographical work done by scholars like T. Satyamurthy, M.G. Sasibhooshan, S.J. Mangalam, Peter Berghaus (Munster University, Germany), G. Sarojini Amma, T.T. Mony, P.S. Radhadevi and P. Gopakumar, through their papers to the South Indian Numismatic Society Annual Converences, are laudable[19].

The State of Kerala formed of the princely states of Travancore and Cochin and the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency is an area unexplored and ignored by historians, epigraphists and numismatists. There is wide scope for greater numismatical investigations in the state. Almost all aristocratic families of Kerala, even today possess invaluable collection of coins both of gold and silver. Many of them adorn it as part of their jewellery.

FOOT-NOTES

1. It was Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi 1907-1966) who made this view popular. Although all Professor of Mathematics, Kosambi's interest in history knew no bounds. This

innate interest made him to study coins. Kosambi had personally examined more than twelve thousand coins of all periods, especially the punch-marked coins. See Introduction by B.D. Chattopadhyay in *Indian Numismatics* by D.D. Kosambi, I.C.H.R., New Delhi, 1981, pp. V-vii. Even those who do not subscribe to the Marxian interpretation of history would agree with Kosambi in his numismatic studies, See Kosambi's *An Introudction to the Study of Indian History* (Bombay, 1956), pp. 164-170.

2. *Ibid.*
3. S.K. Maity, *Early Indian Coins and Currency System.* New Delhi, 1970 pp. 1-6.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. Sir A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India from the Earliest Times down to the Seventh Century A.D.* Reprinted, Madras, 1990.
7 A Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History,* Madras, 1994.
8. *Ibid.*
9. P.L. Gupta, *Coins,* New Delhi, 1996, pp. 221-23.
10. Sir Walter Elliot, *Coins of Southern India,* London, 1886, pp. 134-39.
11. N. Lakshminarayana Rao, *Journal of the Numismatiic Society of India,* Vol. IX, Part II, pp. 97-104.
12. Parameswari Lal Gupta, *The Early Coins From Kerala,* Trivandrum,. 1988, pp 2-3.
13. *Ibid, passim.*
14. *Ibid.* pp. 46-49. The above book was first published in 1965 and reprinted in 1988. Also see N.G. Unnithan, Punch Marked Coins of Iyyal, *Journal of the N.S.I,* Vol. XXV, pp. 22-28.
15. See details in Roman-Coins, from Panangad by M.G. Sasibhooshan in *INDIS REVIEW* (ed. by Prof. T.P. Sankarankutty Nair), Trivandrum, Vol. VIII, Nov. 1990, p.22.
16. M.G. Sasibhooshan, Old Coins from Angamali in *INDIS REVIEW,* July 1987, pp. 13-15.
17. Tirukulasekharapuram has an ancient Viṣṇu temple from the days of the second Chera Kingdom. This place in NH 17 is now locally known in an abbreviated form as T.S. Puram. The present author who made a visit to locate the place found it difficult to see the ancient temple in the beginning. Even transport authorities know only about T.S. Puram, not Tirukkulasekharapuram.
18. *Travancore Archaeological Series,* Vol. V, pp. 162-166.
19. See details in *Studies in South Indian Coins,* S.I.N.S., Madras, 1991-1999, Vols, i-ix.

11

WRONG IDENTIFICATION OF THE IMAGES OF VIŚVARŪPA VIṢṆU FROM GUJARAT

Dr. Mrs. Haripriya Rangarajan

Gujarat is a State where one can find the images of Viṣṇu in various forms. These images include Viṣṇu with two hands to twenty hands and with single face to four faces, his incarnations, composite forms and other examples belonging from the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. Gujarat was ruled by Kṣatrapas (38 A.D. - 400 A.D.), Guptas (415 A.D. - 470 A.D.), Maitrakas (470 A.D. - 788 A.D.), and Caulukyas (Solaṅkis 942 A.D. to 1304 A.D.)

During the Maitraka period several unique images of Viṣṇu have been found including six images of Viśvarūpa form which are iconographically very significant. These six images are as follows:-

1. Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu presently worshipped as '*Kālśi Chhokarānī mā*' in the shrine of Nīlkaṇṭha Mahādeva at Śāmalājī (Himmatnagar Taluka, Mehsana).
2. A sculptured fragment from Devnīmorī near Śāmalājī, which is at present preserved in the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda (No.2372).
3. A damaged sculpture from Śāmalājī which is also in the Museum at Baroda (No.2550).
4. A damaged sculpture said to have been procured from Śāmalājī was in the Private collection at Ahmedabad. It has been recently moved to the National Museum at Delhi.
5. A damaged Viśvarūpa image from Kaṭhalāl village which is presently preserved in the local High School at Kaṭhalāl.
6. The last image of Viśvarūpa recently found in the village of Oganaj is being worshipped as Tripuramātā by the villagers at Oganaj (Daskori Taluka, Ahmedabad).

The figure no.1 and no.6 are the only images of Viśvarūpa which are being still worshipped in the temples. Unfortunately both of these images are misinterpreted as Mother Goddesses. The present paper discusses about these images and their identifications.

The first image of Viśvarūpa (6th century A.D.) is in the shrine of Nīlkanṭha Mahādeva at Śāmalājī (Fig.28). The villagers especially Bhils and Rabaris have got the strong notion that the deity is the Mother surrounded by a number of small children in the *prabhāvalī*. 'They worship the deity as '*Kālsī Chhokarānī Mā*' which means 'Mother surrounded by twenty-three children'. The figures are wrongly identified as children while they represent the *avatāra* forms of Viṣṇu and other deities numbering twenty-three. The local people and the villagers regard the deity as protector and benefactor of children and no woman in these communities dares to leave Śāmalājī without paying her respects to this Goddess. The image apparently is that of a Male deity with three human heads and eight hands. The *prabhāmaṇḍalas* around the image contains a good number of divinities.

The main deity with three faces is seated in *vīrāsana* on the inter-twined coils of two serpents with human bust and three hooded serpent canopy. The deity having eight hands suggests that it should have fourth face on the back. However, the central face is mutilated but the faces on the left and right have wide opened eyes. The pierced and elongated ears of the deity partially conceal the smaller side heads emerging without necks. All the three heads of the deity are adorned with highly ornamental tall and cylindrical *kirīṭamukuṭas*. The *pradbhāmaṇḍala* is so impressive with twenty-three figures in the oval shaped *maṇḍala*. Among them two figures, with swords and roles respectively in their right and left hands, are shown as emerging out from the mouths of the deity's side heads.

In the centre of *prabhāmaṇḍala,* above the crown of the main deity, the figure of Hayagrīva is emanating directly from the main image of Viśvarūpa. However, the legs of Hayagrīva, upto the thigh, are not seen because of the main deity. Above him rises Brahmā who is seated on a double lotus. He is represented with three heads, (fourth one on the back is not visible). Above the figure of Brahmā Śiva is seated on a lotus. The four-armed Śiva holds *triśūla* and *khaṭvāṅga* in the upper two hands. The lower right hand is in *abhayamudrā* and the left hand rests on the thigh holding an unidentified object. To represent Śiva as '*Kāla*' (Time) the figures of Sun and moon are shown at right and left of Śiva. Both of them are holding their robes in hands. The crescent is visible with moon behind the halo, while the Sun shows halo with an incised inter rim. In the similar fashion to the right and left of Hayagrīva there are two figures of Brahmanas. The other divinities such as Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Balarāma, Sāmba, Arjuna, Bhīma and Ṛṣi are present in the *prabhāmaṇḍala.*

There is no doubt that the above image is that of Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu having somany deities in the *prabhāvati* and it has wrongly been identified as female deity.

Another image of three-faced Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu (7th century A.D.) is in worship in a temple in the village Oganaj, 20 kms, from Ahmedabad (Fig. 29). The villagers informed that the image was unearthed from the field and at present it is worshipped as Devī under the name Tripuramātā because of her three faces.

It is a pity that even though the main image can be clearly identified with male deity, the villagers in blind faith very ridiculously have painted the deity along with other 23 figures with *sāris* in green colour and blouses in red colour. Though the deity in Śāmalājī image has been called "Kalśi Chhokrānī Ma" and is being worshipped as goddess yet no changes in its form has been made. But in the case of Oganaj image it is so much painted that it is very difficult to identify the figures carved in the *prabhāmaṇḍala*.

Unlike the image of Śāmalājī, the central crown of the present image has one special feature. It has in the centre of the crown a large and circular medallion containing a grotesque human face with bulging eyes, flat nose and a large grinning mouth with protruding tongue. This face is identified as that of Rāhu. According to mythology at the time of *amṛtamanthan*, it was Viṣṇu who being informed by Sun and Moon about Rāhu's drinking of *amṛta* and masquerading as a god, decapitated him leaving the head to roam in the skies. Hence Viṣṇu has the epithet "Rāhuśatru and Rāhumūrdhanhara" meaning decapitator of Rāhu. The figure of Rāhu has been depicted at the centre of the crown of Viṣṇu to symbolise the fact that the demon has been trapped and has therefore been prevented from entering into the world of gods.

Thus both the images of Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu discussed in the paper are indeed the masterpieces of Maitraka period datable to the 6th century A.D. (Śāmalaji) and the 7th century A.D. (oganaj).

12

SADĀŚIVA IN BENGAL SCULPTURE

Dr. Gourisankar De

Śiva, in his different manifestations, has fascinated Indians and foreigners alike throughout the ages.[1] He is at once the creator, the destroyer and the preserver of the universe. The worship of Śiva has been traced by some scholars to Harappan civilisation.[2] The Gupta inscriptions reveal Śaivism as a fully developed religion comprising in it the cults of Rudra, Śiva and the phallus.[3] Bengal did not remain outside the influence of this growing faith. This is evident from the Damodarpur Copper Plate. The cult secured royal patronage in eastern Bengal. The Gunaighar Grant of A.D. 506 represents Mahārājā Vainyagupta as *Mahādeva pādānudhyāta*. Śaśāṅka of Karṇasuvarṇa and Bhāskarvarman of Kāmarūpa, two kings of Eastern India, who lived in the first part of the seventh century were ardent devotees of Śiva. As perz information a four-faced image of Mahādeva (*probably mukhaliṅga*) was installed, during the reign of Dharmapāla.[4] The Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla records a gift by the king to the Śiva-*bhaṭṭāraka* and his worshippers, the *Pāśupataṣ.*[5] Śiva has been represented in various forms at Paharpur.[6]

The early Sena rulers were adherent of Śaivism.[7] The inscriptions of the rulers contain several references to different aspects of the Śiva cult. Vijayasena and his Son Vallālasena designate themselves, as *Parammāheśvara.*[8] Śiva is invoke under various names in the Sena copper-plate grants-Śambhu,[9] Ardhanārīśvara,[10] Umā-Maheśvara and Pañcānana. However, Lakṣmaṇasena called himself a *parama-Vaiṣṇava* and *parama-nārasiṁha.*[11] His successors Viśvarūpasena[12] and Keśavasena[13] called themselves *Parmsaura*. Yet each of the copper-plate grants of the Sena kings of Bengal had a Sadāśiva seal attached to it. This indicates that Sadāśiva, a form of Śiva, was the family deity or patron deity of the Sena dynasty, irrespective of the religious adherence of an individual king to any particular sect.

According to *Rudra-Jamāla,* there are six forms of Śiva-Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, Parāśiva and Sadāśiva.[14] Sadāśiva is held in the highest esteem by the Śaivas as the conception of Sadāśiva-mūrti and Mahāsadāśiva-*mūrti* contains within it the whole philosophy of the Śuddha-Śaiva school of Śaivism.[15] The *Sadāśiva-Tattva* implies that "Sadāśiva is the highest and the Supreme Being, formless, beyond the comprehension of any one, subtle, luminuous and all pervading; not contaminated by any qualities (*guṇas*) and above all actions. It is from this Supreme Being that all else have their origin, and end at his will".[16]

The worship of Sadāśiva was very popular in some parts of Bengal. More than thirteen images of Sadāśiva are known from Bengal.[17] The majority of them hail from North Bengal However, two are known from West Bengal.

The close agreement of the plastic representations with South Indian texts, as well as their main association with the Senas who hailed from Karnata Country in South India, has led some scholars to suggest that the Senas brought the cult of Sadāśiva from the South where it was much in vogue.[18] But the cult was of North Indian Origin.[19] The two views can be adjusted by suggssting that the particular Sadāśiva cult, prevalent in Bengal from the Sena period, was derived from the southernised version of the original cult of Northern India.[20]

Quite relevantly, we may also refer to atleast two Sadāśiva icons of the Pre-Sena period. The ruins of Rāmāvatī, the capital of Rāmapāla (now in West Dinajpur district), has yielded several remarkable sculptures including an image of Sadāśiva. The finely executed sculptural piece is now in the collection of Balurghat College.[21] Another inscribed stone image from Sibbalī (Dinajpur), consecrated during the reign of Gopala III, (A.D. 1129-1143), is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[22]

The sculpture in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, bearing the inscription (No. B. 62), is a fine representation of Sadāśiva as described in the *Uttara-Kāmikāgama* and the *Garuḍa-Purāṇa.* According to these texts the five-faced and ten-armed deity, should be carved in the *vadda-padmāsana* pose showing in his right hands *abhaya* and *varada mudrā, śakti, triśūla,* and *khaṭvānga,* and in his left ones *sarpa, akṣamālā, ḍamaru, nīlotpala* and *bījapūrak.*[23]

The figure of Sadāśiva in the Indian Museum, has no Manonmanī by its side but on the central section of the *pañcaratha* pedestal two male attendants of Śiva, carrying *śūlas* in their left hands, are gracefully carved. At the extreme right corner is Nandī looking upwards, and on the corresponding corner, on the other side, is the donor couple, The image is a significant specimen of the Pāla period.

In the Barrackpur Copper-plate of Vijayasena and in the Naihati copper-plate of Vallālasena, Śiva is mentioned by different names including Sadāśiva. The copper plate of Vallālasena, issued from the Sena capital Vikramapura (in the Dacca District of present Bangladesh), has a seal attached to it bearing the figure of the ten-armed Sadāśiva.[24] A similar seal is affixed to the Tarpandighi Copper Plate of Lakṣmaṇasena.[25] At least in three Sena Copper plates the seal specifically mention *Sadāśivamudrā.*

An independent stone image of Sadāśiva was discovered from the village Aparkathi in Vikramapura and it was preserved in the collection of Vikramapur Chitraśālā in the village Arial.[26] The copper plate issued from Vikramapur and the sculpture discovered from Aparkathi, alongwith other evidences, indicate that Vikramapura was the main capital of Vallālasena. The Vikramapur stone image of Sadāśiva is one of the masterpieces of Pāla sculptural art (Fig. 30) The figure carved in relief sits in *vajrapadmāsana* on a double-petalled lotus. The right hands show *abhāya* and *varada-mudrā, śakti, triśula* and *khaṭvānga* while the left ones have *sarpa, akṣamālā, ḍamaru, nīlotpala* and *bijapūrak*. There is no Manonmani by its side, The *Gaṭāmukuṭas,* the necklace, the *yajñopavīta, mekhalā* are nicely worked out. Two flying *gandharvas* on the stela and small Nandī are also carved. The stone image closely resembles the image of Sadāśiva of the royal seals.

There are following three Sadāśiva stone images in the collection of the Varendra Research Society Museum, Rajshahi (Bangladesh)[27] One example (*No. C (b) I*, 235) shows Sadāśiva sitting, on a double-lotus throne, The three-faced and ten-armed figure shows the *vāhana Nandī* in front of the throne. On the right the image has a small figure of Gaṅgā riding a *makara,* However, the left side shows Yamunā riding a tortoise. Present Inscribed example hails from Shahpur, P.S. Niamatpur, (Manda Rajshahi Bangladesh).

Another Sadāśive (*No. C: (b)* 2. 180). from Jaminkarai, P.S. Tapan, (Dinajpur), almost similar to the previous one, does not show the figures of *Nandī, Gaṅgā* and *Yamunā*. The image is flanked by two sitting male figures with clubs on two sides in place of similar standing figures in previous example.

The third example (*No. C (b) 3 160*) known from Khiratta, P.S. Tapan, Dt. Dinajpur is quite similar to the first one. A 12th century inscribed image of Sadāśiva of the reign of Gopāla III (c.1129-34 A.D.) is known from Rajitpur, Dinajpur. There are two Sadāśiva images in the collection of the Vangiya Sāhitya Parishad Museum, Calcutta.[28]

The Sadāśiva images of Bengal also represent a very significant, probably missing, link between the religious and aesthetic, heritage of South India and that of ancient Bengal.

FOOT NOTES

1. R.C. Majumdar (Ed.) *The Age of Imperial Unity,* 5th edition, Bombay, 1980, PP. 456-461.
2. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization,* Vol-1, London, 1931, 52 ff.
3. R.C. Majumdar, *The History of Ancient Bengal,* Dacca University, 1943, p. 404; the Mathura Pillar. Inscription of Chandragupta-II (E p., XXI. 4)
4. Damodarpur Copper Plate, No.4, E9.XV, 140; 9C.V. 432-433
5. *History of Ancient Bengal,* p.404.
6. K.K. Gangopadhyay, *Bānglār Bhāṣkarya* (Bengali), Calcutta, 1986, pp.178-79.
7. *History of Ancient Bengal,* p.517.
8. Barrackpur Copper-plate of Vijayasena, *Inscriptions of Bengal,* Vol-III: N.G. Majumdar (Ed.). Rajshahi, 1929, p.66; Naihati Copper-plate of vallālasena, *ibid,* p.78.
9. Anulia copper plate of Lakṣmaṇasena, 9b, cited above, p.88.

10. Naihati copper-plate, cited above p.75.
11. Govindapur copper plate of Lakṣmanasena, 9b, cited above p.97.
12. S-P copper-plate of Viśvarūpasena, 9b, cited above, p.143.
13. Edilpur copper-plate of Keśavasena, 9b, cited above, pp.127, 129.
14. N.R. Ray, *Bāṅgālīr Itihās. (Āddi Parva)* abridged edition, Calcutta, 1382, Vangābda, p.322.
15. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography,* Vol. IInd part II (2nd edition), Delhi, 1993, p.361.
16. Ibid., p.371.
17. Enamul, Haque *Bengal Sculpture* (Hindu Iconography upto c.1250 A.D.), Dhaka, 1992, p.143.
18. History of Ancient Bengal, cited above, p.546.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Biswanath Das, *Uttar Baṅger Purākirtī* (Bengali). Calcutta, 1392 *Vangābda,* p.23.
22. A.K.M. Shamsul Alam. *Sculptural Art of Bangladeh,* Dhaka, 1985, p.142.
23. Euamul Haque, *Bengal, Sculpture,* p.144.
24. Jogendranath Gupta, Vikrampurer Itihas (Bengali), Calcutta, 1346 *Vanigābda,*
25. 9b, cited above, p.99, pI.12.
26. J. Gupta, op. cit. p.270.
27. R. Basak, & D.C. Bhattacharya, *A Catalogue of the Archaeological Relics in the Museum of Varendra Research Society,* Rajshahi, 1919, pp. 8-9.
28. J. Gupta, *op. cit.,* p.271.

13

CHOREOGRAPHY : A QUEST IN INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Dr. (Mrs.) Ranjana Srivastava

The penchant for the West has created an over vibrant cultural scenario during the last fifty years or so. Though used specifically in the context of dance and theatre, its ambit appears to be continually enlarging.[1] Dazzled with the glamourization of the West, perhaps we have become somewhat less sensitive to the subtleties inbuilt in our cultural traditions. Handed down for generations, from father to son, taught and practised in the *gurukulas,* our artists went much beyond the mere compositional and arrangement aspects in their works. Their effort was to portray the breath within the body, to transcend time and space; to create *rasa;* to realize the four *puruṣārthas* - the ultimate purpose of art.

An attempt is being made here to understand the art of choreography[2] with reference to India's cultural heritage. A culture which gave special importance to *vāk* (word or speech) is considered to be of divine origin or divine energy itself. *Vāk* was spoken and not written. Thus, in an oral tradition such as ours, the student, through regular practice is not only exposed to the vocabulary of the art form, but also learns to translate it into a visual form, through gestures, body language and the facial expressions during the period of his apprenticeship under the *guru.* Patterns of movements are grilled into the students through repeated practice.

Movements, postures, space, time, etc. were recorded in different mediums and skills, such as literary, pictorial, dramatic and sculptural. These documentations, perhaps due to the constraints of the mediums, appear to be in the manner of the oral tradition, i.e., as *sūktas, bījas* or *stavas,* in the form of tableaux's or *jhāñkīs,* which preclude an extensive knowledge both on the part of the creator/director as well as the spectator of such a spectacle.

The earliest extant work of dramaturgy, the *Nāṭya Śāstra* by Bharata Muni, sheds light on all imaginable facets which go into the making of any theatrical performance. The enumeration of *karaṇas, aṅghāras, sthānakas, maṇḍalas, cārīs;* the chapter on *raṅgamañca, tāla, abhinaya, dhruva gana,* clearly reveal that Bharata was fully aware of the concepts of time and space; the art of arrangement not only on the linear but also on the horizontal level. The chapter on *Rasa* is specially revealing in the sense that it proves how art becomes a vehicle for the ultimate deliverance.

Here the extension of space, unlike parameters is engulfing. The word *anukaraṇa,* for the activity of *nāṭya,* thus becomes very potent.

Some of the important features of choreography can now be understood and explained with reference to the ancient Indian methods of dramatic presentations. That choreography is inherrent in any group/solo performance, whether dance or drama may be seen in the very ancient system of our folk dances, where the dancers move clock-wise, anti-clockwise, in circles, squares, triangles, diagonals, lines, etc., in perfect unison to the accompanying music and rhythm. The need to notate, however, was never very poignant in the Indian system, where the tradition has continued through the principles of performance and transference. Interestingly some wonderful work has been done by Hildegard L. Spreen[3], who has noted some of the folk dances of South India in the western method. He has given the staff notation of the songs along with their rhythmic pattern (*tāla*) and spelt each single movement of the dancers - their arms, hands, palms, legs, toes, head, body, trunk, feet, etc. etc., along with the space, direction and the number of repetitions for each chorus. The picture which emerges is stunning.[4]

In the *Saṅgeeta Ratnākara,* while discussing the play *Vikramorvaśīya* by Kālidāsa, Śāraṅgadeva very distinctly discusses the body language alongwith the directions of movements, stage and music in the Nāndī *Śloka,* which introduces and explains the scene. This he refers to an *abhinaya prakaraṇa.*[5]

The *Aṭṭaprakārams* and the *Kramadīpikas* are the choreographic devices for the theatrical presentation of Sanskrit plays in the *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* literature (to which may be traced the beginnings of dramaturgy in Kerala).[6] While the *Aṭṭaprakārams* describe in Malyalam how the actors will move on stage during the course of their performance on the verse/prose of their drama, the *Kramadīpikas* narrate the background information not explicit in the text of the drama, but which is extremely important for the actors on stage, such as *āhārya* (make-up and costume details), the modes of entry and exit on the stage etc. The *Aṭṭaprakāramas* may be interspersed with *Kramadipikas,* though *Kramadīpikas* without the mingling of *Aṭṭaprakārams* are rare. Thus, while all the instructions for actors are given in the *Kramadīpikas,* the *Aṭṭaprakārams* giving the textual meaning and explanations help the actors to act.

The *Aṭṭa-kathās* in *Kathakalī,* again are the literary aspect of the classic dance drama of Kerala. Histrionic arts like *Koothu* and *Kūṭiyāṭṭam*[7], *Kṛṣṇāṭṭam* and *Aṣṭapadiyāāṭṭām* have had a direct bearing on the evolution of the art of *Kathakalī,* which is a beautiful blending of the Āryan and Dravidian cultures, from which dances, dramas and ritual performances were freely borrowed.[8]

The *Kṛṣṇāṭṭam* dance dramas, the precursor to the *Kathakalī* tradition were created about the 17th Cent. A.D. They appear to be a very "clear imitation of the *Gīta Govinda* of Jai Deva", written about the 12th cent. A.D.[8]. According to anther view, *Kṛṣṇaaṭṭam* was preceded by the dance play *Aṣṭapadiyaaṭṭam,* which again was modelled after the *Gīta-Govinda*[10].

The *Gīta-Govinda,* the song of songs, holds a unique position in the cultural heritage of this great country. It was and is, an immense source of inspiration for poets, painters, singers, dancers and dramatists. The *Gīta-Govinda* of Jaur, reveals the existence of a *nāṭaka,* "the *Bhagawān Govinda Rangalīlā*"[11]. It makes use of both prose and verse. The use of the word *Jhāñkī* in this specific manuscript is very significant as it points to another genre in dramatic representation - the tableaux's,[12] which are representational scenes, chosen by the director/choreographers of the troupe, from the very rich mythological traditions, especially associated with the cult of Viṣṇu, which gave an impetus to the whole art of *Līlā-nāṭakas.*

The narrative element, whether as prose or poetry cannot be altered. It, however, takes into account the element of contiguity, which later developes into *aṅkura* or improvisation, though improvisations are rare in group performances. Today, *Kathaka* has moved from being a solo to a ballet performance in imitation of the western methodology, but the section of "*bhāva-batānā*" in the traditional *Kathaka* performance, makes a bid at pointing out the dramatic element inherent in the art. The imitative and symbolic gestures, provide a visual commentary of the text, in this case the song, sung by the dancer himself or supported by accompanists, "like the illuminations of a manuscript".[13]

The choreographic notion played a significant role in dance sequences, even on stone or in colour. For instance, a reference may be made to a circular medallion (Fig. 31) on the cross-bar of a railing from the Buddhist *stūpa* of Amarāvatī, dated second cent. A.D. This medallion, which is at present in the Madras Government Museum, lays *bare* a theme, the adoration of Buddha's alm bowl. The followers of Buddha are shown dancing madly, centering a person carrying the bowl on his head. The figures in this medallion are seen accommodated within spiral lines gradually expanding from its centre. The centrifugal movement has been adjusted before it could lose its structure and balance and thereby appears as a stilled choreograph.

In the scene from music and dance from Purānā Mahādeva Temple, Hansagiri in Rajasthan (A.D. 961-971) (Fig. 32), the musicians have aligned with the dancer to give a beautiful linear effect. The instruments used are flutes, cymbals (big and small varieties), drum, and a clapper. The first three musicians on the left as well as the two musicians on the exreme right stand in *ābhaṅga*. The dancer in the middle has a very strong bent in both the knees with her right foot on the toes-the *prekhaṇa maṇḍala*. Her right hand is on her right hip while the left is mutilated. Her feet position and her flowing hair show that she is in the middle of some movement. The musician to her right, the drummer, and also the flutist, second to her left also have their feet in the *prekhaṇa maṇḍala*. The musician to her left, with her back towards us has her feet in the *nāga-bandha,* she plays the *jhāñjha*. The arrangment of the dancer and the musicians is extremely artistic and graceful.

The line drawings of the Bundi *Gīta Govindas* of 17th century A.D. in the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi are beautiful aural-visual figures, deftly achieved through a transference of the syntax and phraseology of the stanzas of the poem, through the medium of drawing and painting.[14] The use of space by dividing it into foreground, background or enclosures, add to it a dramatic effect and recall a stage. In the drawing (Fig. 33) the artist has depicted six pairs in different spaces of the pictorial surface. The love stricken *Rādhā* imagines Kṛṣṇa in the company of another *gopī*. The artist very deftly matches his representations of the love-lorn state with the poet's description of the same. In the company of another *gopī* Kṛṣṇa's dalliance is brone out, when he paints the *gopīs* forehead, breasts, adorns her hair, slips bangles on her wrists, adorns her with a girdle or applies lac on her feet. The drawing gives the impression of a rotational movement with a centre point. The choreography thus enhances the *rasa* of the drawing.

The painting *Nava-Nārī Kuñjara*, of 18th cent. A.D. (Fig.34) from the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, brings out the aspect of choreography in figure-formation. How beautifully the dancers have utilized space, matched with just the right tuning to form an elephant. The dancer forming the back left leg of the elephant has her feet in *samapāda* with a forward tilt to her body and her fingers, interlocked in *karkaṭa hasta,* just below her naval. The dancer next to her (second from left) forming the right back leg of the elephant stands upright in *samapāda* and *sambhaṅga*, her right arm naturally falling on her right knee held in place by the right arm of the dancer perched on the *mṛdaṅga*. The third dancer, from the left, precariously balanced, sitting on the *mṛdaṅga,* with both legs bent from the knees, her left leg crossing the dancer to her left, forming the left front leg of the elephant, while her right arm loosely falls down, the hand taking a horizontal *patākā,* coming just upto the *mṛdaṅga,* she balances herself on both her toes with an acute bend in her knees, her face is turned towards the dancer to her right on the *mṛdaṅga*. The dancer forming the front right leg of the elephant stands in *samapāda, samabhaṅga,* with her right hand on her right hip, her left arm extends forward between the legs of the dancer forming the trunk of the elephant who is shown standing on her left leg in *samapāda*. She raises her right leg upto her shoulders bending it from the knees to rest her foot on the left arm of the dancer to her right, she has clasped both her arms above her head, her body is in an *ardhacandrākāra* (half moon-shape). The dancers forming the top row are closely huddled together. The third dancer in the top row from the back of the elephant is in a difficult position with her right foot resting on the shoulder of the dancer on the *mṛdaṅga*. She is completely bent down from the waist with both her arms turned up clasped in *karakaṭa hasta* just behind her head. Kṛṣṇa as *mahāvata* is shown seated on the head of the third dancer from the left in the top row. He is *sūcī hasta* (left) while right forms a *muṣṭi*.

This acrobatic formation is achieved to the precision of even a fraction of a second, as is borne out in the outstretched arms of the group of musicians, who express their joy at the achievement of the feat in the manner of hitting the *sama* together. The dancers are thoughtfully dressed in tight stripped *pājāmās* and short blouses to bring a more realistic effect. Except the dancer forming the hind leg of the elephant, who wears a braided plait to symbolise the elephants tail, all wear *lahaṅgā, dupaṭṭā* and short blouses. The instruments shown are a *tānapurā* and a single drum.

Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varaṇasi has in its collection a unique painting on *Kāliya-damana* (Fig. 35). Painted in the last quarter of the 18th century A.D., this painting from Kangra, at a glance reminds one of a water-ballet. The painting shows Lord Kṛṣṇa standing in a dancing posture on the spreaded hood of the snake Kāliya. Kṛṣṇa is about to punish it, when the *nāginīs,* or the snake queens emerge out of the water with folded hands and plead Kṛṣṇa to spare the life of their lord. They are shown in various attitudes of submission and worship of the Lord. The Pahārī painter, composed the theme in such a way that it has taken the structure of a pyramid in which Kṛṣṇa occupies its apex. In such a composition the apex attracts the eyes of the audience/ spectators first from where its gaze diverts in a down-wards movement upto its base.

The painting is clearly divided into two registers - the ground and the water. The top register showing the landscape portrays excellently, the turbulence in the clouds, in the movements of the cows, in the reactions of the *gopas*. In fact, it helps in reinforcing the scene enacted under the waters of the Yamunā (though not shown in the painting). Some of the *gopas* have fainted, one is looking anxiously at his friend, the cows are running frantically, helter-skelter.

Thus, we see that the art of choreography is not at all new for the Indian cultural heritage. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that it is woven in the fabric of India's great art heritage as well.

FOOT - NOTES

1. Today even fashion shows and group songs are choreographed.
2. The word choreography is a combination of the words choros + graphy. 'Choros' is Greek word which means dance and 'graphy' is a combining form, denoting either a particular style of writing, drawing etc. or a method of arranging or recording data within a particular discipline. 'Graphy' is from latin 'graphia', which comes from the Greak 'graphein' which means to write.

   Thus, choreography is defined as the art or the notation of dancing especially ballet, or the art of arranging or composing dancing, especially ballets.

   See, The Collins English Dictionary; also see *International Encyclopaedia of Dance;* Founding Edition, S.J. Cohen; Oxford University Press, 1998, Vols. 2, 3.
3. Hildegard L. Spreen, *Folk Dances of South India;* Oxford University Press, 1945.
4. *Ibid.*

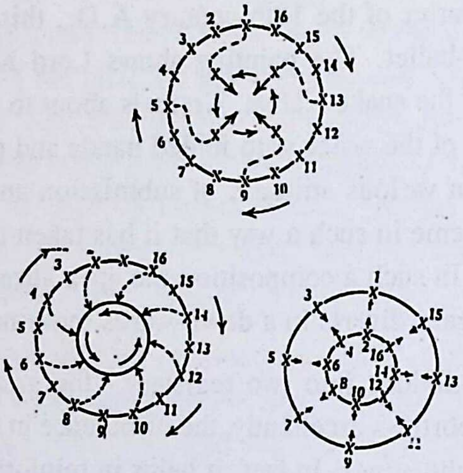


Fig.

5. Śāraṅgadeva. *Saṅgīta Ratnākara;* Ed. Pt. S. Subrahmanya Sastri, The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Madras, 1963.

6. *Mārg* : The Mārg publications; Gen. Ed. Mulk Raj Anand; Vol. XI, Bombay, Dec. 1951. Ch. VIII, S.K. Nayar, '*Aṭṭa Kathā*'.

7. *Ibid.*, *Koothu* and *Kooṭiyāṭṭam* represent a peculiar method of enacting Sanskrit plays in the temples of Kerala by a class of traditional actors called *Chakiyars*. Ch. VIII, S.K. Nayar. *ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, Ch. II, Mohan Khokar. *The Tradition.*

9. *Ibid.*, Kapila Vatsyayan, *Jāur Gīta Govinda* (a dated 16th century Gita Govinda from Mewar), National Museum, New Delhi.

10. *Mārg., op. cit.*, Ch. II, Mohan Khokar, op. cit.,

11. Kapila Vatsyayan, *Jāur Gīta Govinda,* National Museum, New Delhi.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Norvin Hein, The Miracle Plays of Mathura, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1972, See Ch. 'The Kathak'.

14. Kapila Vatsyayan, The *Bundi Gīta Govinda,* Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, 1981, "The Drawing compresses together the description in each of the verses of the *prabandha*", p.101.

14

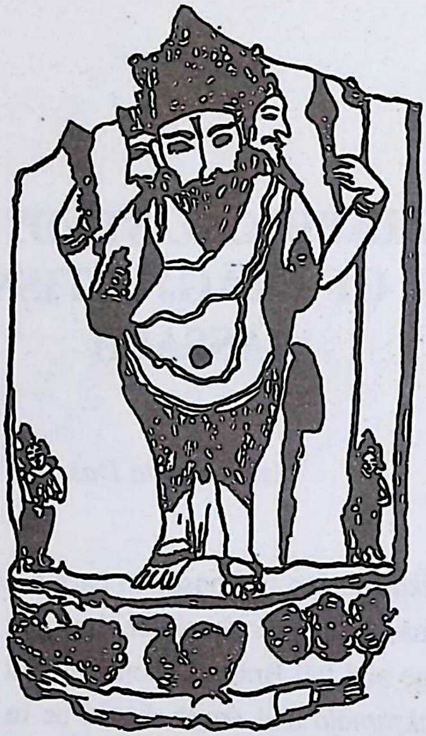
AN ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF BRAHMĀ IN THE ART OF PRĀGJYOTIṢA-KĀMARŪPA (ASSAM)

Ms. Paromita Das

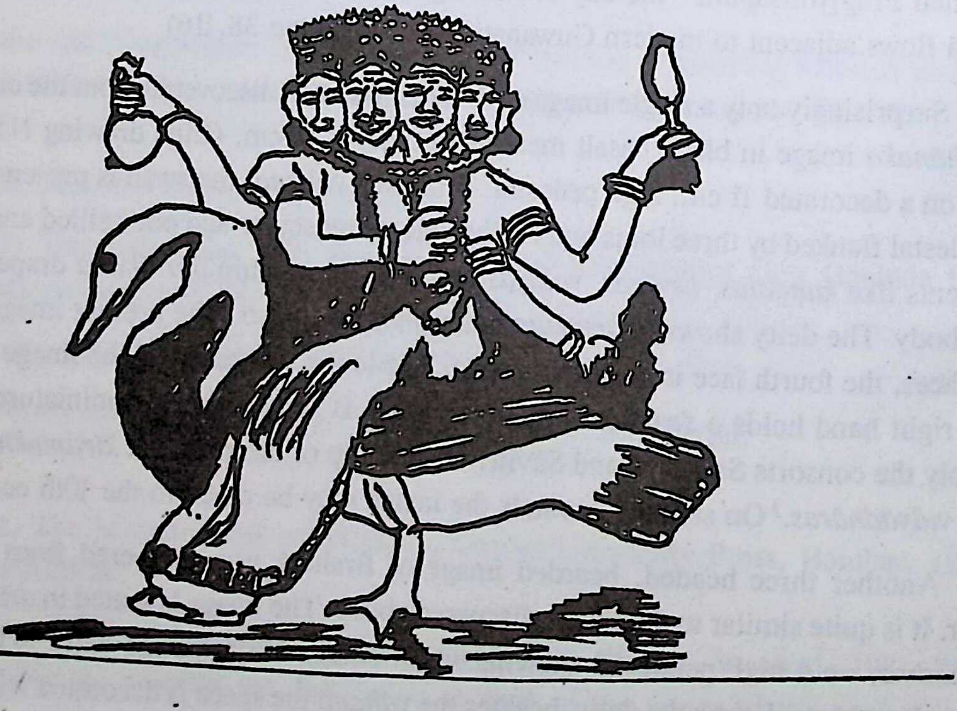
According to the *Kālikā-Purāṇa* (supposed to have been composed in Assam in 9th-10th century A.D. - 12.30), Brahmā, the creater should be shown as four-faced, four-armed and seated on a lotus or on a swan. Huge and tall Brahmā should hold a *kamaṇḍalu and śruk* in his upper right and left hands, while *akṣamālā* and *śruvā* should be in his lower right and left ones. He should have the pot for butter (*ājyathālī*) on his left side in front. Hisconsort Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī should be on his left and right respectively. The *Kālikā Purāṇa* (38.119) also states that in the ancient city of Prāgjyotiṣapura (modern Guwahati), Brahmā first created the stars and hence it was called Prāgjyotiṣapura - the city of first light. The river Brahmaputra, said to be the son of Brahmā flows adjacent to modern Guwahati (*Kalikā-Purāṇa* 38.116)

Surprisingly only a single image of Brahmā has been discovered from the city of Guwahati. The *sthānaka* image in black basalt measures 60 cm x 31 cm. (Line drawing No. 5). The deity stands on a decorated 11 cm. high pedestal. Brahmā's *vāhana,* the swan is present at the centre of the pedestal flanked by three lotus buds[1]. The deity is muscular and pot-bellied and bedecked with ornaments like *kuṇḍalas, keyūras, valayas* and *nūpuras*. A thin *paridhāna* drapes the lower part of the body. The deity shows *jaṭāmukuṭa* and *yajñopavīta* also. The present image possesses only three faces, the fourth face is however hidden. The lower two hands of the image are broken. The upper right hand holds a *śruk* and left a *śurvā.* He is flanked by two miniature female figures, probably the consorts Sarasvatī and Sāvitrī.[2] At the top of the stele is a *kīrtimukha* flanked by two flying *vidyādhāras.*[3] On stylistic grounds the image may be dated to the 10th ecntury A.D.

Another three headed, bearded image of Brahmā was recovered from Barpukhurirpār, Tezpur. It is quite similar to the image discussed above. The image is seated in *ardhaparyāṅkāsana* on a *padma,* on a high pendestal showing seven swans. Here too the deity is flanked by seated figures of consorts. Below the deity, besides the *vāhana* the space is decorated with *padmakorākas* or lotus buds. Instead of *kīrtimukha* and flying *vidyādhāras* we have five miniature figures of



Line Drawing No. 5 : Brahmā (black basalt), Pragjyotishpur (Assam), 10th century A.D.



Line Drawing No. 6 : Brahmā, Gaurīsāgar, Dist. Śivasāgar.

seated *ṛṣīs*. The *Matsya Purāṇa* states that the god is to be eulogised by the ascetics.[4] This feature is frequently seen in the Sena sculptures of Bengal.[5]

An eight armed image of Brahmā was in the collection of Assam State Museum.[6] (The present example represents Brahmā as seated on a *padma* in *yogāsana,* with *vāhana*-swan. The lower right and left hands of the deity are in varada and *abhaya mudrā* while upper right and left hold *śruvā* and *śruk*. The other details are in keeping with the texts.[7]

Brahmā is also depicted in architectural components of Pragjyotiṣpur. The ruins of a massive Sun temple was discovered at Tezpur.[8] Amidst these ruins are an enormous lintel measuring 7½ cm in length and 50 cm in breadth. It has three raised panels each of them divided into a large niche in the centre with a smaller one on either sides. The panel on the left contains a two-armed *sthānaka* figure of Brahmā in the central niche with an attendant on each side. This beautiful figure has a long beard and wears a long conical cap. The other niches contain figures of Sūrya and Śiva.

Another image of Brahmā (94 cm x 76 cm) is preserved at Cole park in Tezpur. It is sculptured at the bottom of a huge panel of the *avatāras* of Viṣṇu. Here, the *sthānak* figure of the deity with swan is in *dvibhaṅga* on a simple *pīṭha*. Both of his hands are broken. Decked with the usual ornaments the god is flanked by his consorts, Another figure of Brahmā is carved on a door-lintel of a temple from Chāng Choki Bamāmghat (Kowaimarī).[9] Both the above figures may be placed between 9th and 11th century A.D.

In the medieval period (c.15th century onwards) we find a deviation from the classical mode. The fluidity of movement and blissfulness of expression is replaced by "rigid and heaviness of form of the sculptures.[10] This is true of an image of Brahmā at Gaurīsāgar in Sivsāgar District,. It is a four-armed image (82cm x 51cm) with four heads with *jaṭāmukuṭa*. It is seated upon a *haṁsa*. The deity holds *śruvā, śruk,* and *akṣamāla*. However, the object held in the fourth hand is not clear. Another image similar to the one described above is in the Assam State Museum. It was recovered from Tezpur. It is a four-armed figure (48cm x 37cm) of sandstone, sitting with a *haṁsa*.[11]

Thus we can conclude that in the art of Assam, Brahmā was generally depicted in accordance with the norms prescribed in ancient texts, particularly *Kalikā-Purāṇa,* although the *āyudhas* carried in his hands are varied, probably suggesting local influence. Besides independent icons Brahmā also finds place in niches of temple lintels, on carved rocks and panels, along with other deities. However, no temple of Brahmā is discovered from Prāgjyotiṣa-Kāmarūpa.

FOOT-NOTES

1. S.K. Saraswati has, however, identified only three of the decorations as *padmas*, the others are identified as emblems, including a *ajyathālī* or butter pot.
2. R.D. Choudhury has identified them with a *ṛṣi* and a devotee.

3. At present the part of the stele above Brahmā's head is missing. It was intact at the time of discovery as reported in the 'Journal of the Assam Research Society' (Volume IX, No. 3 & 4, 1942) by S. Kakati.
4. S.K. Saraswati, *Comprehensive History of Assam* Vol. I. Guwahati, 1990, p.408 (Ed. Dr. H.K. Borpujari).
5. R.D. Choudhury, *Archaeology of the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam,* Delhi, 1995, p.93.
6. P.C. Choudhury, *The History of Civilisation of the People of Assam A.D.*, Guwahati, 1987, 3rd Revised edition, p.453.
7. It is no longer in the Museum today.
8. Annual Report, ASI, 1924-25, pp.94ff.
9. R.D. Choudhury, *op. cit.*, p.94.
10. M. Dutta, *Sculptures of Assam,* Delhi, 1990, p.128.
11. G.N. Deva Goswami, 'Brahmā in Ancient Assam from the Kālikā Purāṅa', *Pracyajyoṭi,* Guwahati, 1998, p.59.

15

PATTERN DRAWING FOR BANARAS BROCADES : A NOTE

Dr. Anjan Chakraverty

Designers crafting the sumptuous Banaras brocades in time past were normally ambidextrous artisans proficient in both *likhāi* or in pattern drawing on mica sheets and paper as well as in *naqśabandī* or in preparing thread jacquards. Yusuf Ali,[1] Pupul Jayakar,[2] Vijay Krishna,[3] Devaki Ahivasi[4] and B.C. Mohanty[5] have explained at length every intricate stage of *naqśabandī,* the pre-staging for the actual operations on the drawloom. However, ragarding the pattern designing on mica or paper they have presented a comparatively less detailed account.

The inventor, accepted later as presiding saint of the art of *naqśabandī,* Hazrat Khvaja Bahauddin *Nakśaband* Bokhari Rahamatullah Alia (c. 1288/98-1371 A.D.) of Bokhara flourished during the reign of Mongol II-khans. The legendary *naqśaband* of the Safavi era, Ghiyath-al-din 'Ali (c.1529-1593/95 A.D.) of Yazd was "a high-ranking official in the administration of the royal workshops at Ispahan". besides being a composer of satirical verses.[6] Mughals had a predilection for his fabrics which were invariably figurative representing literary themes. In the year 1598 Akbar received as part of the diplomatic gifts from Shah Abbas, I (1557-1629), sent through his emissary Minucihr Beg, three hundred pieces of brocade, "all woven by the hands of noted weavers" and "fifty masterpieces of Ghiyath Naqśaband."[7] Some seven fabrics bearing the signature "*amal-i-Ghiyath* (the work of Ghiyath) are dispersed in various collections.[8] A substantial quanity of fabrics designed by him that was readily available in the textile market during Akbar's reign must have influenced the imperial Mughal production. "Skilful masters and workmen", claimed Abul Fazl, "have settled in this country to teach people an improved system of manufacture."[9]

Presence of Persian *naqśabands* in the imperial Mughal workshops at Lahore, Agra Fatehpur and Ahmedabad seems more than probable who trained "the intelligent workmen of this country" by acquainting them with a whole range of "figures and patterns, knots, and variety of fashions."[10] Incidentally, one can only guess the influence of the "unique craftsman" Ustad Wais, "the gold-wire drawer (*zar-kaśa*)," on the craftsmen employed in Humayun's atelier at Kabul, especially in the area of preparing metallic threads suitable for brocade weaving.[11] It is undeniable that Persian *naqśabands* improved the technique of the complex lampas used in Mughal luxury textiles but the exact role played by the designers or pattern drawers both independently and in co-ordination with the *naqśabands* is hard to pinpoint.[12]

As has been recorded by Jayakar the families of *naqśabands* migrated from Gujarat to Banaras following the great fire in 1300 A.D.[13] In the absence of actual examples and recorded history it is almost impossible to say anything about the gradual development of designing or the technique of *naqśabandī* prevalent in Banaras as late as the last quarter of the 19th century. Yusuf Ali's account of the designer-*naqśābands,* undoubtedly the earliest on the subject, is as follows:

> The art of designing the patterns of silk fabrics is scarcely known outside Benares. Agra is the only other city which produces silk fabrics of any pretensions, but these do not introduce elaborate designs. Benares, being the manufacturing, centre of the brocade industry, offers great opportunities for the display of talents in the way of designs for these expensive gold cloths. There are two notweworthy designers (*naqśabands*), viz. Tajammul Husain and Muhammad Husain. They have both been at the Empire of India Exhibition and the India and Ceylone Exhibition in London during the years 1895-96.
>
> Travel appears to have sharpened their wits. They got new designs in their *velayati* tour, many of which they are introducing in Benares work now.[14]

In this context it is also worth quoting a passage on *naqśabands* from Mohanty's *Brocaded Fabrics of India,* a compendium of brocading techniques:

> According to Samsul Haq (70 years old) of Dosipura, *nakśa*-making started in Banaras in the middle of the 19th century. Murtaza Hussain and Hayat Muhammad, grandfather of Samsul Haq of Doshipura started *nakśa*-making in Banaras. Murtaza Hussain was employed in the exhibition held in London in 1884 as a designer, and Muhammad Ṣaban (Mota Shaban) as a weaver. Murtaza Husain, Taj Mull Hussain and Mohammad Hussain learnt *nakśa*-making from one Hayat Mohammad, son of Khuban. Khuban's family came from Ayodhya. They were orginally Rajputs who were converted to Islam during the reign of Shahjahan. About 10 families migrated from Ayodhya and settled in Banaras, having been invitd by the Mahārājā of Banaras.[15]

The cultural milieu of Avadh proved exceedingly enticing to the art-loving elite of Banaras who imbibed many of its traits. Marked impact of Avadh born later-Mughal lyricism, a little over-ornate in its imagery, is easy to detect in architecture and techniques of wall decoration, textile and other related art forms. Haq's statement points to a subsequent migration of *naqśābands* from Ayodhya or Faizabad, a prime centre of Avadh culture, during the late 18th century,[16] but about the stylistic traits of innovative features they introduced in the prevalent tradition of Banaras brocade designing we know little, except the introduction of cotton *jāmdānī* technique in imitation of Tanda as also Dacca archetypes.

The 19th century artisans designing the Banaras brocades may be categorized into three self-defined occupational groups. Out of these the *nakśa*-makers cum pattern drawers arguably form the major segment and due to their dexterity, in interrelating successfully both the crucial stages, they remained much sought-after craftsmen in the weaver community. The second group consists of *naqqāsa* or bazar painters, "who made designs for textiles or decorated the walls of houses."[17] To the third group belong a handful of painters proficient in the local variant of Avadh and Jaipur style of miniature painting commissioned occasionally to prepare designs for brocades.[18] The miniature painters of Banaras, Ustad Mulchand (active c. 1840-1890) and some of his successors, did play the role of multi-media designers and apart from making workshop designs for brocade patterns they visualized ornamentation for the enamelled jewellery and decorative furniture. Ustad Mulchand who learnt the rudiments of painting in his family workshop worked under Ustad Julla Miyan of Ramnagar, a *naqqāsa,* to master the genre of purely ornamental designing.[19] However, in many of the iconic paintings by Mulchand and his successors can be detected a remarkable display of *kimkhāb* patterns in the painted drapery, some of these looking authentic being true to the contemporary woven archetypes. A complete training of a painter presupposed his proficiency in the areas of decorative designing, both floral and geometric,[20] which he utilised in enlivening the borders of the album pages or the lacquered bindings of *muraqqā*. An 18th century volume of seventy-three floral designs assembled by a Mughal painter to be used for woodwork or furniture decoration show more or less the same repertoire of decorative motifs used on decorative borders or in textiles.[21] Strangely enough, none of the known sets of Company period *firkās* or "paintings depicting occupations" executed in Banaras consist of any portrayal of a pattern drawer of a *naksāband,* though one can find in quite a few of such *firkā* sets representations of gold thread maker, embroider, printer, dyer, spinner and even cloth seller.[22] In Kashmir, however, the pattern-drawer or *naqqāśa* for the loom-woven shawls, who were few in numbers, "received the highest pay-far higher even than that of the weaver"[23] and they sometimes "coloured" their own drawing. Portrayal of a pattern drawer (*naqqāśa*) preparing a design for shawl in a set of *firkā* by Kashmir artist datable to c. 1850-60 A.D. is indeed a rare depiction of a traditional textile designer at work.[24] The 19th century pattern-drawers of Banaras normally engraved the "actual size" designs (*khākā*) for brocades on *abrak* or mica (*talc*) sheets. Mica remained a popular media with the Company painters of Murshidabad, Patna and Banaras who used them for painting and for making tracings.[25] Being fire-resistant it was also used in panelling the decorative lanterns. Yusuf Ali, who had seen some of the expert designers execute with great confidence or mica sheets, gives the following description.

> At present the designs are usually worked out in papers instead of the *abrak* (talc), formerly in use. It is marvelous with what accuracy and ease the designers are able to work out an elaborate design with their steel points on the unpromising looking *abrak,* where that material is used. Having drawn the design and obtained the approval of the owner of the weaving establishment for which it is intended the *naqśāband* next makes out a model in cotton threads.[26]

Designing on mica sheets was not altogether discontinued at the turn of the 19th century and skilled *naqśabands* like Kallu Hafiz (1900-1986 A.D.) worked on both paper and mica simultaneously till 1940.[27] To work out a pattern with iron stylus on mica sheets (Figs. 36, 37) required a perfect visulization of the decorative scheme in all its detail, since incorporation of virtually no correction was possible at a second thought. Every incised linear flourish had to be final. The *caukarī* or graphing to demarcate the grid structure of warps and wefts was done, once the basic design (*khākā*) was completed with every minor detailing.

The crisply incised designs on mica (Fig. 38) and their contemporary woven counterparts seem to share a common ethos rootes in a somewhat languid abstraction of vegetal forms. Among many modalities adopted by the 18th and 19th century local *naqqāśa* to enliven parts of the architecture, *raṅg bhurrī* (lit. tint spattering) and *cirāi kā kām* (sgraffito) gained wide currency.[28] The technique of sgraffito borrowed from Mughal and Avadh sources was grounded in the process of improvised scratching through layer of quicklime and mortar to reveal a ground of an intensely purplish red ochre pigment, *hiraunji*[29] or *vice-versa*. Some of the incised patterns on mica and those done by sgraffito on quicklime base, however, reveal a striking correspondence in terms of draughtsmanly intent. The rhythmic structure of the volumetric leafy shapes as also the interplay of subsidiary decorative components, full-bodied yet suave, is indeed the connecting feature between these two art forms (Fig.39).

Designing on paper had its own advantages. As none of the brocade designs on paper predating those done on mica during the late 19th century have survived it is hard to suggest a starting point for the use of paper by Banaras *naqśabands*. Once any design got processed by *naqśabands* the weaving establishments hardly cared to preserve the parent design (*likhāi*) on paper as records and this is the reason we get limited number of specimens to infer anything regarding the gradual evolution of decorative motifs. Designing on paper and mica continued side by side and it appears the *naqqāśa* as well as the painters turned designers found it perfectly handy preferring paper to mica sheet. Majority of the late 19th and early 20th century designs on paper (Figs. 40, 41) were done with brush in black ink termed as *syāh-kalam* by the local *naqśabands*. Paper used for the purpose was either handmade *Sanganer* or map litho. To pigment the ink lamp black tempered with gum arabic and oil was found ideal. The practice of tinting the *khākā* became much popular towards the early part of the present century and as Ustad Jafar Ali recounts, he and his father both coloured their *khākās* in order to foresee a meaningful distribution of hues and metallic threads in a woven motif.

In conclusion this is to be observed that the designers were invariably trained at their family guild and in order to master the salient features of the Banaras convention they had to spend years patiently making endless copies and also doing paraphrasing of a certain floral unit, or of a leafy shape with double reflexsed volutes (*jonkiā*) or even the meandering flow of the scrollwork (*jaṅglā*). These were some of the constant imageries forming a set repertoire much favoured by the splendour-oriented patrons of the era.

FOOT-NOTES

1. Yusuf Ali, *A Monograph on Silk Fabrics Produced in the North — Western Provinces and Oudh,*. (1900, reprint 1974), pp.50-51

2. Pupul Jayakar, "Naksha Bandhas of Banaras", *Journal of Indian Textile History,* No, 1967, pp.21-34.

3. Vijay krishna, "Living Weavers at Work," *Banaras Brocade* (1966), pp.68-69.

4. Devaki Ahivasi, "Banaras Ke Naqśaband Tathā Likhāi Karnevāle" (Hindi), *Yeh Banaras Hai,* pp.54-58.

5. B.C. Mohanty, *Brocaded fabrics of India,* Vol I, 1984, pp.20-26.

6. Alexandra Lorquin, *Samit & Lampas,* 1998, p.164 and 29.

7. Abul Fazl, *Akbarnāmā,* Vol, III, p.113; Abul Fazl has further stated in *Ain* : "Experienced people inquire continually into the prices of articles used both formely and at present, as a knowledge of the exact prices is conducive to the increase of the stock. Even the prices become generally lower. Thus a piece woven by the famous Ghiyath — i-Naqśaband may now be obtained for fifty *muhrs,* while it had formerly been sold for twice that sum"; tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. I, p.94.

8. Alexandra Lorquin, *op. cit.*

9. Abul Fazl, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.93.

10. *Ibid.*, pp.93-94; Mohammad Umar *naqśaband* and his father Sheikh Mohammad *naqśaband* active during the reign of Aurangzeb, came from Sirhind (cf. Saqi Mustad Khan, *Māsir-i-Ālamgīrī*). I am grateful for this reference to Kalyan Krishna whose exhaustive research on the Mughal and late Mughal guilds is due to be published.

11. P.Chandra, Appendix : A, "the Memoirs of Bayazid", trans. C.M. Naim, *The Tuti-Nama of the Cleveland Museusm of Art and the Origins of Mughal Painting,* 1976, pl.72.

12. The ubiquity of certains patterns and motifs, distinctively in the Mughal arts of the book and textiles prompt one to consider the role played by the artists employed in the *kitābkhānā*. In the absence of recorded material one ends up with a good deal of positive guesswork that artists did provide designs for brocades, carpets and tentpanels. Conversely, the "ornamental artists" (Ain, p.115) or *vaslīsāz* who were engaged to illuminate the mounts (*hāśiyā*) derived "decorative patterns based on the scrolls in *kimkhāb* (*kimkhāb ki likhāī*), cf. Motichandra, *The Technique of Mughal Painting,* 1949, p.72. The only surviving example of "a progress report" in the form of an *arzadasht* from Timurid *kitābkhānā* now in Topkapi Sarai Library describes artist Khwaja Abdul-Rahim busy "making designs for the binders, illuminators, tentmakers, and tilemakers" (cf. Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision,* (1989), Appendix I, p.364). Absorption of such earlier traditions in Safavid regal *kitābkhānā* and the organization of Mughal *kitābkhānā* on somewhat similar lines seems to have sustained and transformed the aesthetic aspiration of the princely circle.

13. Pupul Jayakar, *op. cit.*, p.22.
14. Yusuf Ali, pp, 56-57; For the certificate acquired by Tajammul Hasain cf. B.C. Mohanty, *op. cit,* p.35, pl.27.
15. B.C. Mohanty, *ibid,* p.17.
16. The 1801 Benares "Census" by Mr. Deane also attests to the presence of some five hundred and eighty Rajput weavers manufacturing *kinkhāb, kināri* (trimmings) and silk fabrics. cf Motichandra, *Kāśī kā Itihās,* p.342.
17. Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library,* London, 1972, p.133.
18. Devaki Ahivasi, *op. cit.*, p.56; The contribution of the families of Pahari painters (based more in Guler and Kangra than in Chamba) towards the creation of Chamba *rūmāls* as may be determined from the unfinished or partly-finished (Fig.60) and even fully-finished specimens hardly needs any reiteration. "To draw with the precision that one often sees on rumals, the outline, say, of Ganesha, or of Krishna sporting with gopis", as observes B.N. Goswamy, "would have required remarkably little effort on the part of a painter, for a women embroiderer, however talented, it could not have been easy on the other hand". (cf. B.N. Goswamy, "Threads and Pigments", *The Chamba Rūmāl,* 1999). In Banaras the situation was occasionally similar when the inability to draw perfectly a design on the part of the *naqśabands* was supplemented with the inputs of the professional artists.
19. I am grateful to Dr. Anand Krishna for this piece of information.
20. Motichandra, *The Technique of Mughal Painting,* Lucknow, 1949, Ch, VII: "Decoration and Border". pp.65-72 and figs. 42-50.
21. Toby Falk and Mildred Archer, *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library,* London, 1981, Cat no. 188, p.113, pl.424.
22. Mildred Archer, *op-cit.*, pp.138,141, 143, 148, 151; Mildred Archer, *Company paintings,* London, 1992, p.106, 207.
23. John Irwin, The *Kashmir Shawl,* London, 1973, p.7.
24. *Ibid.*, illus, No. 2; also cf. Archer, *op. cit.*, 1972, pp.232-235 for the descriptive details of the set.
25. Mildred Archer, *op. cit.*, 1992, p.193.
26. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p.57, cf. also illustration No. 34.
27. This information I owe to his son Ustad Jafar Ali *naqśaband* who made use of the impeccably transparent sheets of mica for making tracings till 1950s. As he recounts, blocks (*dhokā*) of mica half an inch in thickness were purchased from Gola Dinanath, the local

wholesale market for herbs, grain and spices. Further, slicing of such blocks were done with knife with great care and precision.

28. Anjan Chakraverty, "Mural Paintings", *Benaras — An Architectural Voyage,* ed. P. Coute and J.M. leger, paris 1989, p.120.

29. Pigment was originally imported from Hormuz, an island in the Persian Gulf, hence the name Hormuzi = Hindi : *hiraunji.* cf. Motichandra, *op. cit.,* 1949, p.21.

16

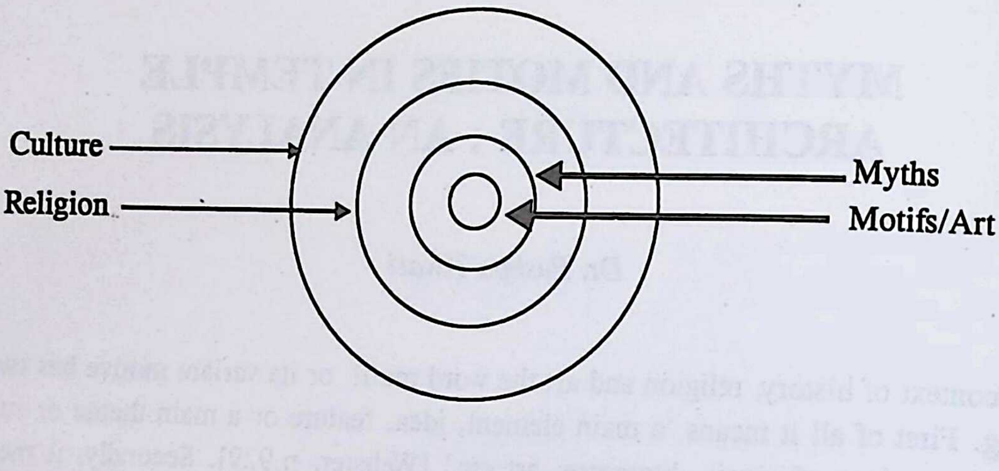
MYTHS AND MOTIFS IN TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE : AN ANALYSIS

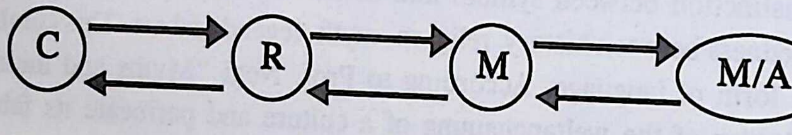
Dr. Pushpa Tiwari

In context of history, religion and art the word motif or its variant motive has two levels of meaning. First of all it means 'a main element, idea, feature or a main theme or subject as elaborated in a piece of music, literature, art etc.' [Webster, p.929]. Secondly, it means any recurring form or shape in a design or pattern. Art-historians generally tend to diffuse both the meanings and make no distinction between symbol and motif. In fact, there seems to exist a complex chain of interrelatedness between history, religion, myth, legend and art. This combination gives birth to motifs as a form of language. According to Prof. Negi "Myths and their motifs invariably constitute the leaven of the weltanchauung of a culture and permeate its fabric and identity in the way, matter and form, inform the world of reality."[1]

All ancient civilisations were dominated and governed by religious traditions. These religious traditions were characterised by various myths and legends which were expressed through motifs and symbols. Myths are the science of pre-scientific age or in other words they are rationalisations of what pre-scientific cultures cannot understand through other means. According to Zimmer, "Myths are not the products of individual experience and reactions. They are produced, treasured and controlled by the collective working and thinking of the religious community. They are produced through an intuitive ananymous creative process and a collective, acceptance. In the myths of ancient cultures we are brought the intuitive, collective wisdom of an ageless, anonymous and many sided civilization."[2] Even the writers of myths recognised the impossibility of expressing the fundamentally indescribable nature of absolute beginnings and ultimate realities. Hence poetry and motifs became their metier. In other words motif is the language of myth i.e. the theme or content of any myth is expressed in the form of motif. Marcea Eliade has described myths and motifs as systems of micro-macrocosmic correspondences and analogies.[3] The combination of myths and motifs exhibits in a popular and pictorial form the experience of ultimate reality. In other words the function of the motif is to represent a reality or a truth and to reveal them either instantaneously or gradually. As religion seeks to deal with man's ultimate truth and reality it is prolific in the production, use and elaboration of various forms and objects. Therefore it is not surprising that religions have been the inspiring source behind a large and diverse body of art.

Indeed in most cultures of the past, religions have been the central cultural fountainhead. This is more apparent in Indian context. The interrelatedness of religion, myths, motifs and art in a given civilization can be understood through the following model of concentric circles:





The intimate relationship between religion and art gives birth to iconogrophy which is the constant essence of any traditional art. Iconography is like a script and characters in which it is written are properly called symbols and motif. The pictorial representation of religion and mythology is the main aim of motifs and motifs in combination form an iconography or myth. Thus it becomes clear that the content of motifs is always metaphysical in nature. Metaphysics and motifs are inseparable from myths and legends. Myths and their motifs are not the products of individual experiences and reactions. They are created, preserved and governed by the collective working and thinking of the society. When meaning of these motifs has been forgotten or ignored then they become "decorative art forms" and are described as "ornamental motifs". But it should be kept into mind in traditional societies like India the idea of art for art's sake was neverprevalent. Even at the first glance what may appear a simple docorative form or pattern is full of symbolic meaning. Every motif is pregnant with deeper meaning which always refers to religion and mythology. It is this background against which I have tried to analyse some architectural motifs in temple art which are generally taken as mere decorative patterns.

Architectural iconography constitutes a field of its own. Temple is conceived as the image of the universe, therefore, it is architecturally patterned according to a specific design of the universe. Great importance is attached to the planning of the temple and its construction is goverened by a canon of symbolical and iconological principles. These principles take the help of various motifs for their manifestation in architectural forms. The individual parts of the building-base, walls, pillars, ceilings all have some pictorial, functional and symbolic value. The motif of 'human form' or 'human body' has played an important role in the architectural planning and elevation of the temple. This is based on the religio-spiritual and pilosophical imagery related to the '*Puruṣa*' i.e. the archetypal, the original or the primordial cosmic person. Right from the time of Vedas upto the time of Purāṇas this motif has been employed to explain the physical, cosmic and spiritual realities as understood by the ancient seers. This motif of '*Puruṣa*' has served as the archetypal model to express the micro-macrocosmic relationships.

Eevery motif refers to some myth from where it gets content and form both. We can trace the myth associated with the motif in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *Ṛgveda* where the *puruṣa* has been described as the origin and personification of the universe at macro level and of society at micro level. Later on various mythological lores and philosophical connotations were woven around this motif. The *Upaniṣadic* tradition tends to spiritualise *Puruṣa* as the inner soul or spirit, but it never looses its anthropomorphic form i.e. '*Puruṣavidha*' or human form. According to *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*[4] *Annamaya* [material], *Prāṇamaya* [vital], *Manomaya* [mental], *Vigyānamaya* [conscious] and *Ānandamaya* [blissful]-these five *koṣa* or layers constitute human form and they correspond to the five succeeding bodies of the *Puruṣa* conceived as the actual human body. This implies that there is no human realm, no matter how much spiritual it may be, which is not structured after the human body. In the *Jaimaniya Upaniṣad*[5] the microcosmic, the macrocosmic and the transcendent catagories of the reality is symbolically expressed in the conception of three *Puruṣas* with their separate forms such as the *puruṣa* as *anurūpa,* the *Atipuruṣa* as *Pratirūpa* and the *Paramapuruṣa* as *Sarvarūpa*. It again suggests the all pervasive nature of human form in Indian thought and psyche.

This mytho-symbolical understanding of *puruṣa* is directly manifested in the field of temple architecture in the conception of '*Vāstupuruṣa*'. This motif in *Vāstusāstra* has been derived from a myth which is described variously in *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, *Ajitāgama, Matsya Purāna* etc. According to this myth in ancient times a terrible demon was born who covered the three worlds with his body. Seeing his terrible form all the gods were frightened. They overpowered this demon or terrible *Puruṣa* and pressed him downfaced on the surface of the earth. *Bṛhat-Saṁhitā* recounts that each god holding different limbs of this terrible demon, later on became the presiding deity of that particular limb and the Lord of creation Brahmā named that fallen demon as *Vāstupuruṣa*. The *Vāstupuruṣa* is measured out in squares from east to west with the course of the sun. Each divinity is laid out in squares. Their total number is 64 or 81 which constitutes the corresponding squares in the diagram of the site plan which is described as the *Vāstupuruṣa - maṇḍal*. The centre of this *maṇḍal* is the place of Brahmā and other gods are grouped around him. According to Stella Kramrisch[6] the symbolism of the vedic fire/sacrificial altar is continuing in this motif of *Vāstupuruṣa* who is none other than the Agni - Prajāpati of Vedic mythology. In the diagram of *Vāstupuruṣa - maṇḍala* the figure of Man or *Puruṣa* is caught, not by his likeness, but by the proportion and symmetry in its parts. His head lies in the east where the sun arises, the feet at the opposite end where the sun sets. In this way the figure of man is seen fitted into the square plan of the extended universe.

In temple architecture the magical diagram of *Vāstupuruṣa - maṇḍala* is converted into base of the building on which the gods have their perennial stand. For the sake of indetification and reference the whole of it and its parts are named according to the parts and limbs of the human body. The body here means nothing but a place of co-ordinated activity, each part being the seat of some special function. It becomes the support, the bodily device by which the temple is built. Architectural ground planning is conceived in the form of the *Vāstupuruṣa - maṇḍala* which is nothing but the knowledge of ordered manifestation of the divine/cosmic form imagined as the *Puruṣa* in which the great seers indentified the reality of macro - microcosm. Likewise architectural elevation or superstructure is identified with the *Vāstupuruṣa* himself which symbolises the transformation of the knowledge or the formless existence into reality in the likeness of the universe which again is conceived as the *Puruṣa*. According to Stella Kramrisch architectural ground planning and elevation symbolically enact the myth of the cosmic descent and ascent of the *Vāstupuruṣa*. The fallen *Puruṣa* caught in the diagram of *Vāstupuruṣa - maṇḍala* again arises in the form of the architectural ascent, step by step, shape by shape along the superstructure of the temple. This body or superstructure in art is that of the *Puruṣa* - the archetypal man personifying the cosmos.

Above discussion makes it clear that the temple is built in the likeness of universe and is architecturally patterned after the motif of human body-which seems to be the all pervasive motif of the religio-spiritual understanding of Indian mind and psyche. The *Śilparatnakośa* a 17th cent. text on Orissan temple architecture based on ancient tradition reflects this pan-Indian view in so far as the temple corresponds to the image of man and that the ground plan and elevation concretise the concept of *Puruṣa* on the macro-micro levels. The symbolical identification of the parts of the temple from plinth to pinnacle i.e. pīṭha to *kalaśa* with the human body is described in detail in the context of *Rekha Prāsāda* i.e. *Nāgara* temple in *Śilparatnakośa*.

विमानं पुरुषाकारं पीठात् ध्वजस्थलावधिः।[7]

The fourteen parts of the vertical divisions of the temple are identified with the fourteen parts of the human body in a realistic manner.

अंगं चतुर्दशं ख्यातं देहे च शिखरेऽपि च।
भुवनसंख्यकभागो वर्तते स्थापकमते।।
पादः दण्डश्च गुल्फश्च जङ्घकटिः तथोपरि।
उदरं गर्भभागश्च राहा हृदयसन्निभा ।।
कण्ठांस मुखकर्पराः शिरश्च शीर्षमण्डलम् ।
चर्तुर्दशांगमेतेषां नृदेहे देवमंदिरम् ।[8]

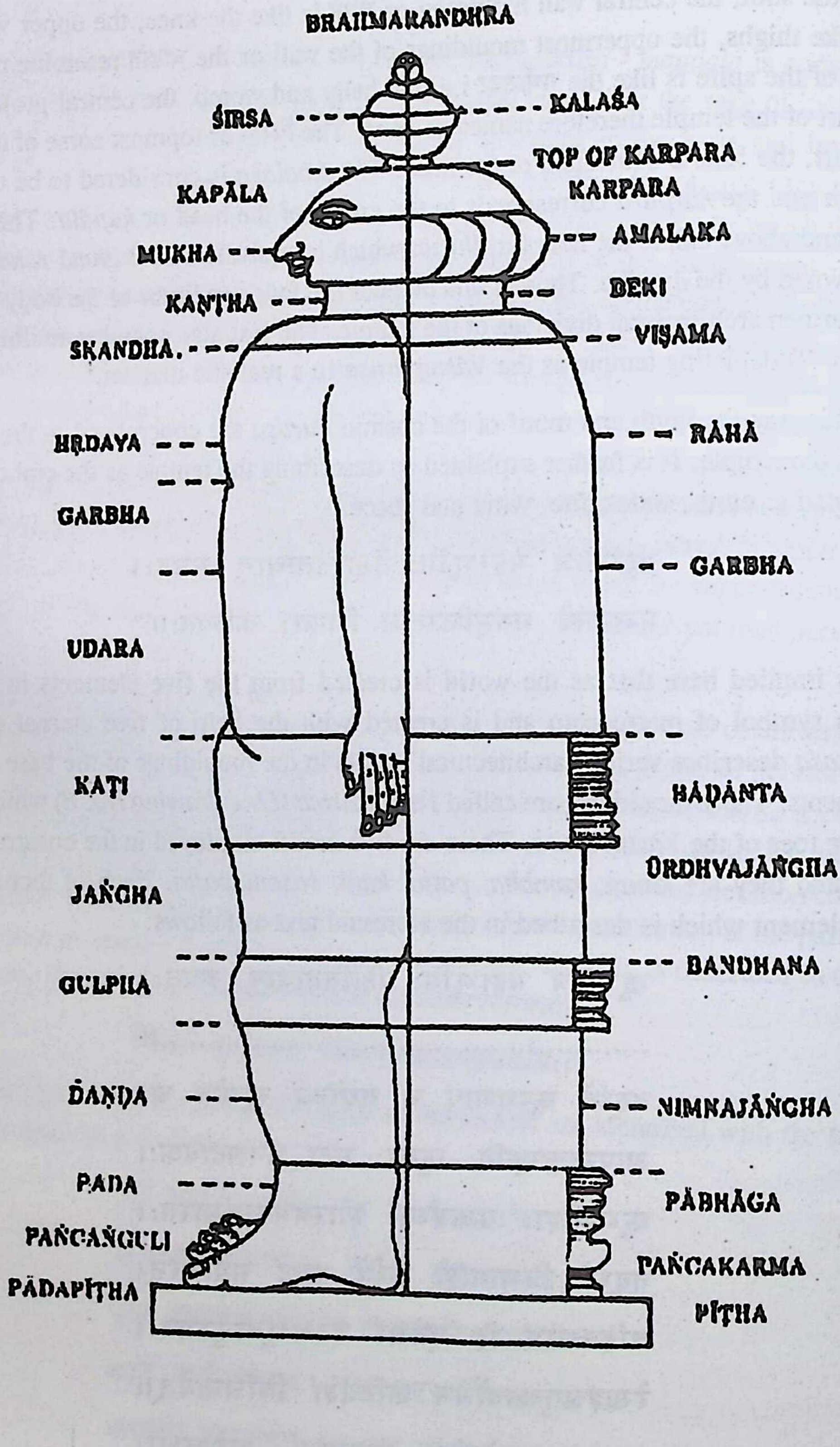
The 'पादपीठ' or base is the foot, पञ्चकर्म on the base is like the five toes. The lower wall or जंघा is like the shin, the central wall moulding or बंधन is like the knee, the upper wall or *jaṅghā* proper is like thighs, the uppermost mouldings of the wall or the बाडांत resemble the waist. The main body of the spire is like the गर्भ/उदर i.e. the belly and womb, the central projection on it is like the heart of the temple therefore named as *rāhā*. The विसम or topmost corse of the spire is the shoulder part, the *bekī* is equivalent ot the neck. The *āmalaka* is considered to be the face of the *Vāstupuruṣa* and the *karpāra* corresponds to the crown of the head or *kapāla*. The top is called the *kalaśa* and above that is the hole for *dhvaja* which is equivalent to *Brahmā-randhra*. The flag shaft is crowned by the *āyudha*. Thus in this manner the fourteen limbs of the body are identified with the fourteen architectural divisions of the temple. The text also contains an illustration (Line drawing No. 7) depicting temple as the *Vāstupuruṣa* in a realistic manner.[9]

In this way the myth and motif of the cosmic *Puruṣa* are concretised in the planning and elevation of the temple. It is further explained by describing the temple as the embodiment of the five elements i.e. earth, water, fire, wind and space:

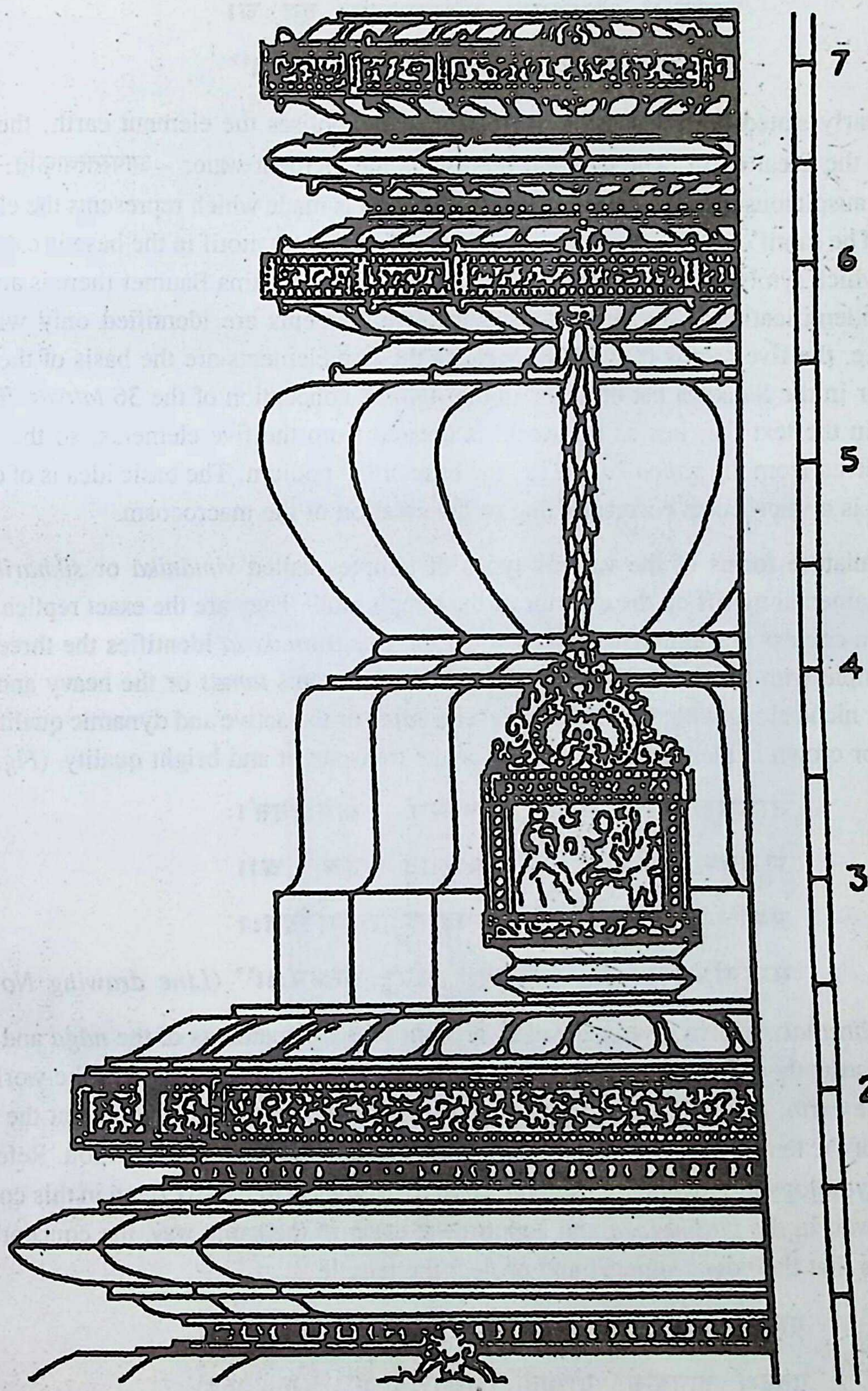
खुरस्तत्र महाभूमिः क्षितितत्वानु रुपतः।
पञ्चतत्वे भवसृष्टिस्तथा शिखरः कल्पितः॥[१०]

It is implied here that as the world is created from the five elements in the same way temple is a symbol of microcosm and is created with the help of five eternal elements. The *Śilparatankośa* describes various architectural motifs in the mouldings of the base as the symbol of five elements. These mouldings are called *Pañcakarma* (*Line drawing No. 8*) which is identified with the five toes of the *Vāstupuruṣa*. There are five motifs employed in the construction of these mouldings and they are *khura, kumbha, paṭṭa, kaṇi, vasantapaṭṭa*. Each of them symbolises a particular element which is described in the aforesaid text as follows:

खुरस्तत्र महाभूमिः क्षितितत्वानु रूपतः।
....॥
तदूर्ध्वे कुम्भभागं च यथोच्चं खुरमेव च।
आपस्तत्वाकृतिः कुम्भः सदा मंगलदायकः।
कुम्भदेशः प्रकर्तव्यः शास्त्रमतानुसारतः।
तदूर्ध्वे त्रिभागांशे ऊर्ध्वे पट्टं समाचरेत्।
वह्निभाग हि एतेषां पञ्चभूतानुरुपतः।
रेखश्चतुष्कयोगेन कटिदेशं विचिन्तयेत्॥
प्रशास्तमध्यदेशेन लताकर्म चरेत्तथा।
यथावायुः प्रवहति तथा कणिश्च दर्शयेत्॥


BRAHMARANDHRA
ŚIRSA
KALAŚA
TOP OF KARPARA
KAPĀLA
KARPARA
MUKHA
AMALAKA
KAṆṬHA
BEKI
ṢKANDHA.
VIṢAMA
HṚDAYA
RĀHĀ
GARBHA
GARBHA
UDARA
KAṬI
BĀḌĀNTA
ŪRDHVAJAÑGHA
JAÑGHA
BANDHANA
GULPHA
DAṆḌA
NIMNAJAÑGHA
PADA
PĀBHĀGA
PAÑCAÑGULI
PAÑCAKARMA
PĀDAPĪṬHA
PĪṬHA

Line Drawing No. 7 : *Temple as Vāstupuruṣa*


7 VASANTA
KAṆI
6 PAṬṬA
5 KUMBHA
4
KHURA
3
2 PAṬṬA
CHEDA
KAṆI
1
CHEDA

Line Drawing No. 8 : *Pañcakarma* moulding of temple.

कणेरुर्ध्वे डमरुभागः पाभागश्चाल एव च।
आकाशतत्त्वरूपेण वसन्तपट्टमुत्तमम्।।[११]

It is clearly stated here that the motif of *khura* symbolises the element earth, therefore *khura is* called the great earth. The *kumbha* represents the element water - आपस्तत्वाकृतिः and it always bestows auspiciousness. Above this the motif of *paṭṭa* is made which represents the element fire - वह्निभाग. The motif of *kaṇi* represents air - *Vāyu*. The topmost motif in the base is called the *vasanta paṭṭa* which symbolises the element *akāśa*. According to Bettina Baumer there is an inner logic in these identifications. She suggests that the five elements are identified only with the *pañcā-karma* i.e. the five motifs of the base because the five elements are the basis of the other *tattvas,* whether in the Sānkhya list of 25 or in the *Āgamic* conception of the 36 *tattvas*. That is why it is said in the text that just as the world is created from the five elements, so the whole temple is conceived from the *pañca-karma* i.e. the base or the podium. The basic idea is of course that the temple is a microcosm corresponding to the creation of the macrocosm.

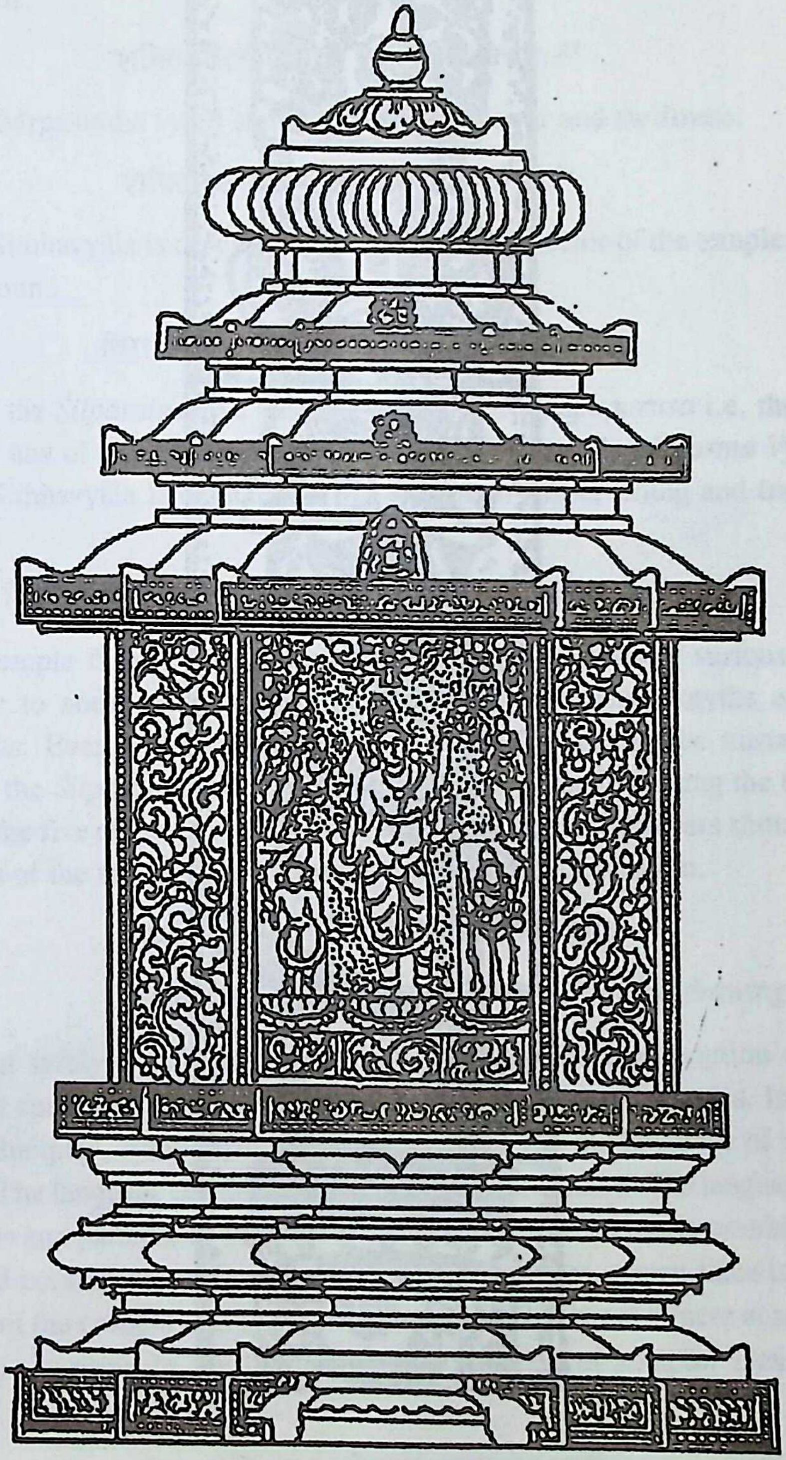
The miniature forms of the various types of temples called *vimānikā* or *śikharikā* are depicted as ornamental motifs on the exterior of the temple wall. They are the exact replica of the temple itself. In context of these ornamental motifs the *Śilparatnakośa* identifies the three main parts of the temple with the three *guṇas*. *Pāda* or base represents *tamas* or the heavy and solid quality, *gṛha* or niche along with the image represents *rajas* or the active and dynamic quality, and *cula* i.e. crest or crown is identified with *sattva* or the transparent and bright quality. (*Fig.63*).

तामसराजस सत्वं गुणत्रयं क्रमोदितं।
भुवनभागसंयुक्तं रेखप्रासाद एव च।।
समत्रिभागशिखरे अन्यशास्त्रानुमोदितः।
समानत्रिगुण यत्र त्रिभागः श्रृणु तत्क्रमः।।[१२] (*Line drawing No. 10*).

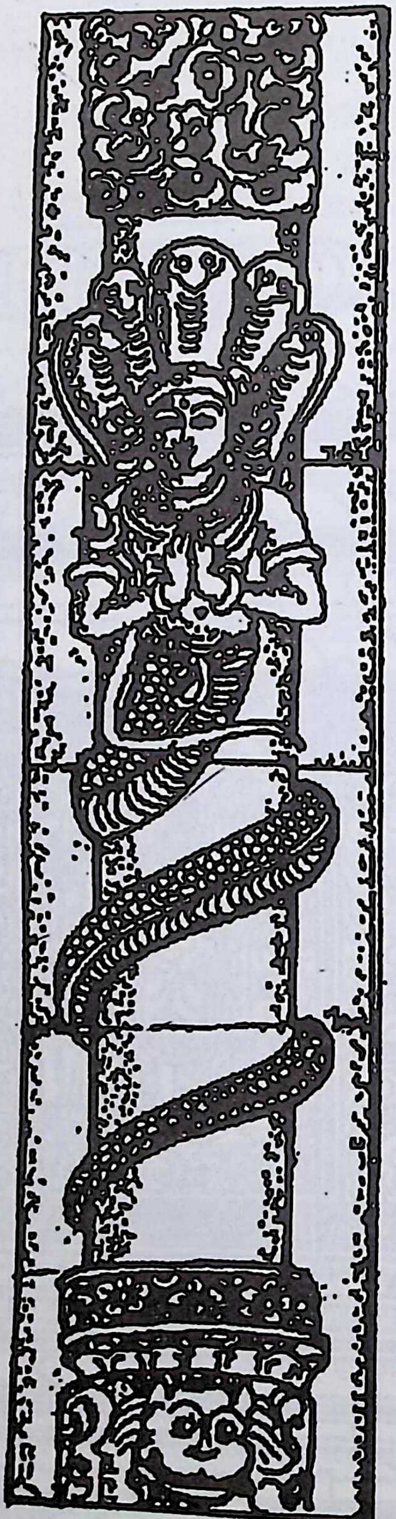
The *Śilparatnakośa* also gives a detailed account of the placements of the *nāga* and *vyāla* motifs. Text suggests their ultimate relationship with various myths of the origin of the world and protection of the earth. It is said that various forms of the *nāga* should be sculpted at the doors and other parts of the temple because they bestow bliss, auspiciousness and protection. Reference to the *Puraṇic* mythology of Ananta or *Śeṣanāga* supporting the earth is also given in this context. As the *nāgas* dwell in the *pātāla-loka* and support the earth in the same way, the conception of *Śilparatnakośa* is that the *nāgas* support and protect the temple.

पाताललोकनागानां निवासः भूमिधारकाः।
एतदर्थ नागबन्धः प्रासादे रक्षकोत्तमाः।।[१३] (Fig. 64)

The motif of *vyāla* is an imaginary composite figure with features of a lion, deer, elephant or man. They are sculpted on the wall just above the base or *pañcakarma* as the protector of the



Line Drawing No. 9 : Ornamental motif and figures in the *rathikās*.



Line Drawing No. 10 : Nāga motif.

temple. Three types of *vyālas* are described in the *Śilparatnakośa*. Gajavyāla is the combination of lion's body and elephant's head. It represents power and intelligence, therefore it is described as the best *vyāla* motif.

शक्तिबुद्धिर्द्वयोर्भावः गजविराल उत्तमः।[१४]

The motif of Mṛgasiṁha *vyāla* stands for victory, power and swiftness.

शक्तिप्रखरतायुक्तो मृगसिंहो विराजते।[१५]

Magnificent Siṁhavyāla is described not only as the protector of the temple but also as the lord of the sacred ground.

विरालिसिंहः सख्यातः कीर्तिरक्षकः क्षेत्रपः।[१६]

According to the *Śilparatnakośa* whenever demon or a *pāpapuruṣa* i.e. the enemy of the temple is crushed by any of these *vyālas* then that *vyāla* motif is called *Dharma Vyāla* signifying majesty. Generally Siṁhavyāla is depicted as the *Dharma-Vyāla* crushing and trampling on the body of the demon.

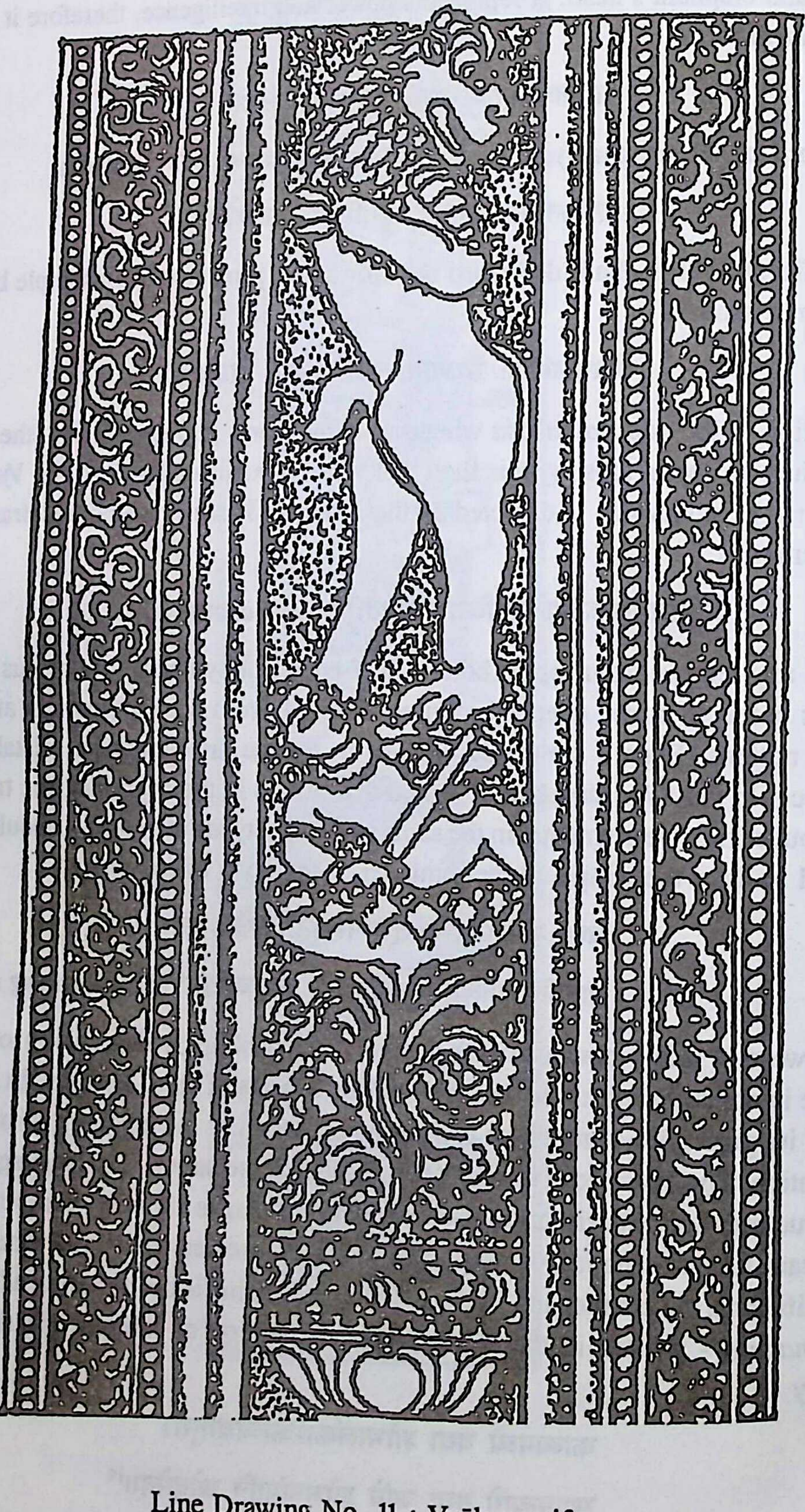
सिंहविक्रमरूपेण धर्मविरालभावतः।[१७] (*Line drawing No. 11*)

In fact any temple from top to bottom is a beautiful synthesis of various motifs. These motifs always refer to some deeper meaning derived from various myths and/or abstract philosophical notions. Even a simple scrollwork in temple art cannot be mistaken as a mere decorative piece. In the *Śilparatnakośa* it is said that just as in the beginning the trees and plants were created out of the five elements, in the same way many types of creepers should be carved on the pillars and walls of the temple as the reminder of the myth of creation.

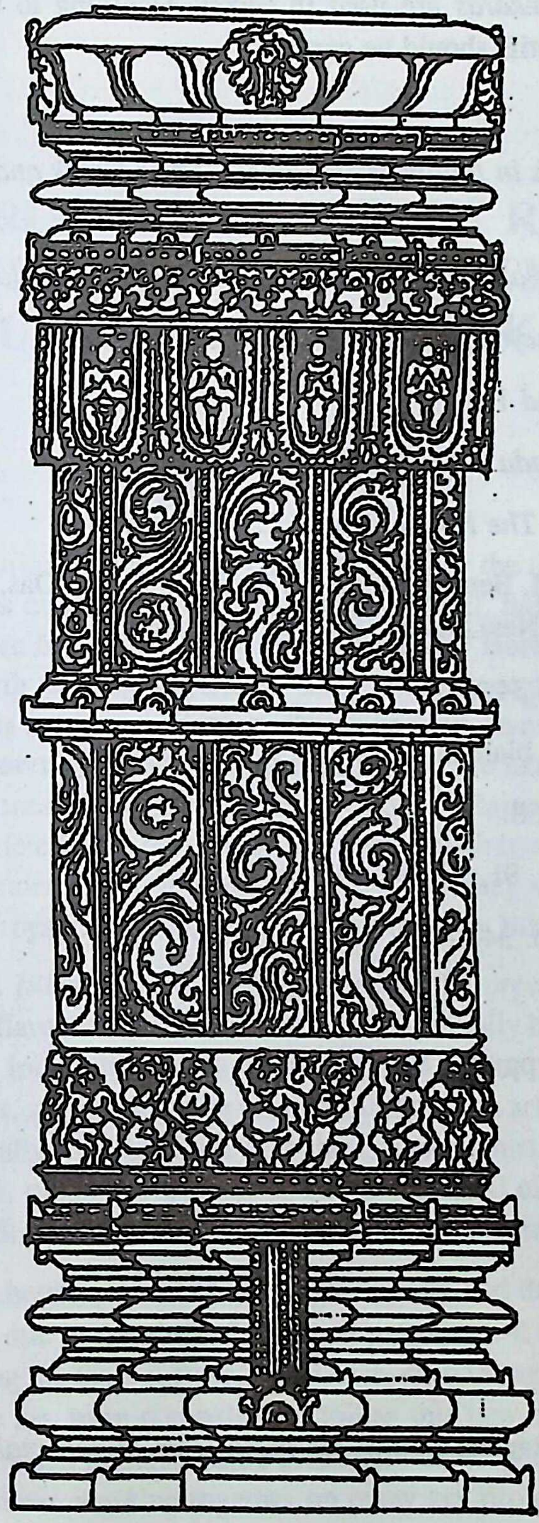
यथा पञ्चमहाभूतात् वनस्पतिः सृजन पुरा।
नानाविधलतिकाशं लताजांघे समाचरेत्।[१८] (*Line drawing No. 12*)

Thus we can safely conclude that a purely archaeological description or art historical analysis alone is not sufficient to discover the hidden aspects of these temples. In any art-form, a knowledge of its principles, symbolism and form-language i.e. the language of motifs leads to a fuller appreciation. The language of mitifs leads to a fuller appreciation. The language of architecture consists of structures and patterns or form-elements which can be variously combined and applied. Just as the beautiful combination of words and *alaṁkara* creates poetry likewise the network of beautiful motifs form the content and spirit of the temple. This is not a mere academic reflection. The *Śilparatnakośa* - written in the living practical tradition of *sthapati* clearly describes the above analogy -

काव्यमध्ये यथा शोभालंकारकाव्यचातुरी।
स्थापत्यांगे तथा जांघे शोभनांगानि खोदयेत्॥[१९]



Line Drawing No. 11 : Vyāla motif.



Line Drawing No. 12 : Scroll work in Temple art i.e. just as beautiful *alaṁkāras* are used in peotry according to the poet's skill, similarly in architecture, beautiful motifs should be carved.

FOOT-NOTES

1. U.P. Arora, *Motifs in Indian Mythologies - Their Greek and other Parallels,* New Delhi, 1981, p.vii.
2. H. Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian* Art *and Civilization,* Newyork, n. d., pp.40-41.
3. Mircea Eliade, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Philosophy,*
4. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.1.5.
5. *Jaiminiya Upaniṣada* 1.27.
6. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple,* Calcutta, 1946.
7. Śilparatnakośa, Ed. Bettina Baumer & Rajendra Prasad Das, Indira Gandhi National Centre For The Arts, New Delhi, 1994, pt. 1.6, p.33.
8. *Ibid.*, pt.1.8-10, p.34.
9. *Ibid.*, p.32, fig.1, plate la.
10. *Ibid.*, pt.1. 84, p.58.
11. *Ibid.*, pt.1. 84, 85, 91, 92, 94, 101, pp.58-60.
12. *Ibid.*, 1.7, 138, pp. 34, 74.
13. *Ibid.*, 1.162, p.80.
14. *Ibid.*, 1.176, 180, pp. 84, 86.
15. *Ibid.*, 1.183, p.86.
16. *Ibid.*, 1.179, p.84.
17. *Ibid.*, 1.183, p.86.
18. *Ibid.*, 1.111, p.66.
19. *Ibid.*, 1.110, p.66

Acknowledgement : Line drawing figures are taken from *Śilparatnakośa*.

17

A LEAF FROM A LAND GRANT REVEALING AN INTERESTING CLUE TO THE LAST JAIPURIA PAINTERS IN BIKANER

Dr. Naval Krishna

Painter artists Jaipurias [this nomenclature was given by the then flourishing Bikaner Usta artists and the *bahī* scribes considering their city of migration], hailing from Jaipur state flourished in Bikaner somewhere from early 18th century onwards.[1] Here in Bikaner [a Rathor Rajput state situated towards north west in Rajasthan] their late degenerated Jaipur style which they brought along with them as heirloom, which on the other hand gave a new dimension to the local dying painting style, however, soon added more damage to the latter. Similar consequences of later Jaipur style were witnessed by the schools of whole of Rajasthan [or once even up to the Gaṅgā Yamunā belt]. It is noteworthy to mention that even though from today's aesthetic judgment, these Jaipurias were considered as sub-standard artists, yet they were well received and were socially strong under the royal patronage of their contemporary Bikaneri Mahārājas.

The then Bikaneri Mahārāja, who began to relish the prevailing British norms in India favoured this new Jaipuri flavour of the painting which was initially based on the realistic art of the current British trends in India. Inevitably, these Jaipuria artists received high and prestigious positions in the royal court, sometimes even more than what Usta artists [who not only established the Bikaner school, but also had been serving the Bikaner court for last three centuries] had earlier received.[2] In turns, much more lands or *gāons* [villages] either owned by Ustas or other communities in Bikaner State were transferred [*tagir*] to these pampered artists.[3]

An apparent clash between local Muslim Usta[4] artists and these inroad Brāhmaṇ[5] Jaipurias was inevitable. However, due to the shift of the royal patronage, it did not last overtly for longer period. As a result fighting for their survival, the Ustas, even though who were deep-rooted in the Bikaneri art and crafts so far, were compelled to follow this new court trend of Bikaner painting set by Jaipurias,[6] Some mutual understanding eventually developed between the two groups. And Jaipurias and Ustas were seen working together on many key projects, for example the project of the wall paintings of Phool Mahal, a prestigious mahal of the Junāgarh Palace[7] The number of Jaipuria artists kept on increasing. From this stage onwards, about 17 Jaipurias worked under the supervision of one Sukharām who later in A.D. 1829 became the[8] *Gajadhar* [*Gajdhar*] of the court art activities.[9]

Two problems related to Jaipurias are still a matter of discussion. [1] How did these Jaipurias penetrate in Bikaner art arena-whether during one of the marriages - matrimonial or political - between the two states or in search of jobs? [2] Why Jaipuria [at least the successors of those 17 artists, mentioned above], even though they received all the benefits could have hardly survived in the Bikaner court for a shorter period [18th-19the century] than their counterpart the Ustas?[10]

A possible answer to the second problem could be obtained perhaps from a leaf from a *patta parvānā bahī* [register documenting various land grants].[11] This important *bahī* listed as ***Bahī Parvānā Saradāran, No. 2/2,*** dated VS 1800/A.D. 1743 [though offers inventory of more years] classified under the head of **Rampuria Records** being preserved in the Rajasthan State Archives, is most relevant to our present discussion. Particularly, its leaf 249 [facing] discussing Jaipurias is of our present interest which narrates the land-grants to Jaipurias and reveals the following points:

1. Rich land possessed by Jaipurias [some of which were earlier in turns possessed by the Ustas].
2. Later generation of Jaipurias complaining about their right of ownership or share forming their ancestral property.
3. Jaipurias dying without much male issue and leaving more girl off springs.

The grants mentioned in this page covers a period of approximate 75 years ranging from VS 1829/CE 1772 through VS 1897/CE 1840, e.g. from the reigns of Maharaja Gaj Singh ji up to Maharaja Ratan Singhji and his Maharaj Kumar Sardar Singhji [before his reign and being as Maharaja].[12]

The present leaf is a copy [is actually a copy for the Rampurias, the then *Dīvān* or Prime Minister] of four *pattas* [original must have been either on conventional paper sheets or copper plates or *Tambe ra Patara* given to various parties] which are indicated in the translation as [ ]-----. The first *patta* [lines 2-6], the latest one is from the middle [1795] of Maharaja Surat Singhji's reign [r. 1787-1828], the second one [lines 7-15] listing the older and perhaps the original ones from the periods of Maharaja Gaj Singhji [r. 1745-87] and thereafter of Maharaja Surat Singhji [r. 1787-1828] was issued in the middle of Maharaja Ratan Singhji's reign [r. 1828-51] [and also to notify the forthcoming ruler, the then prince Saradar Singhji], the third one [lines 15-17]-referred to here as a 'new' *parwana*] was released [renewed] during Maharaja Surat Singhji's [referred to as *Bada* Maharaja] middle year of reign [1799][13] and finally the fourth one [lines 18-19] referring back to the first and the latest situation [lincs 23-27].

Translation of the Plate[14]

[1]----------------------

1. *Jaipuria* [reference or title of the leaf]
2. Owned by Jaipuria Sukharām son of Bāluram[15]
3. *Bigha* 1305 in reference to *gaon* Rasisar[16], where he [they, Jaipurias] resides, even earlier they [actually] owned it from earlier period, those ones [lands] are [as follows:]
4. *Bigha* 1295, *gaon, where Jaigale* [caste] lived.
5. *Bigha* 1400, *gaon* resided by Parve [?]
6. [Total] *Bigha* 400 {in words *Bigha* thousand four and *dori 20*} mentioned in the *Parvana* [royal order] dated *Sud 3*, *Bhado,* VS 1852/A.D. 1795.

[2]----------------

7. [grants given during reigns of] **Maharaja Shri Gaj Singh**
8. **Maharaja Shri Surat Singh ji**
9. Welfare and notifying to *Maharajadhiraj Rajeshwar Narendrashiromani*. Shri Ratan Singh, Maharaj *Kumwar* [prince] Saradar Singhji
10. [who] has kindly bestowed to Jaipurias-namely-Visun s/o Kishan, s/o Khem Ram, grandson [*poto*][17] of Sukhram,
11. [to] this *Gajdhar*[18], a *patta* [land grant], the detail [*vigat*] of which is as follows:
12. -*Gaon* Rasisar, residents are Taladiya, the land [measuring] *bigha* 1305, *gaon* Jangale, land [measuring] *bigha* 1295
13. [in words thirteen hundred five]; of *gaon* Parve's [?] land [measuring] *bigha* 4000
14. - [all combined were bestowed] on these stipulations: [it these Jaipurias] continue to do [entrusted] *chakari* [service] well[19], then these taxes [e.g.] *bhent* [gifts], *begar* [miscellaneous part time works] etc. will not to be enforced as previously [*age hi*].[20]
15. this *parwana* has been bestowed by *shri ji* [i.e. Gaj Singhji][21] on *sud* 13, *Ashadha,* VS 1835/A.D. 1778 in the *Saradara* [*bahi*].

[3]----------------

A new[22] *parwana* as a renewed on by *Bada*[23]

16. Maharaja Shri [=Surat Singhji, see line 18 below] on *sud* [?] 13, *Jetha,* VS 1856/A.D. 1799. The *parwana* was executed in the fashion that[24]

17. taxes of the *bhent* and *begar* etc. are not to be levied as have been in the case of the Ustas, no *khechal* [another tax] will be enforced [?], *gaon's pitha* [??] will be taken.

- *Vad* 4, *Bhadava,* VS 1823/CE 1766 [Maharaja Gaj Singh's period, perhaps referring the first *patta*], place-throne\office [*pay takhat*] of Bikaner and was registered [officially, *kot dakhal*-all legal phrase of the time] by *Mohata* Rao Abhai Singh in the Bikaner court.

[4]-------- note: repeating the expression of the lines 8-10, 12-14]

18. [During the reigns of] ***Bada*** **Maharaja. Shri Surat Singh ji**

19. Well wishing to *Maharajadhiraj Rajeshwar Narendrashiromani*. Shri Ratan Singh, Maharaj *Kumwar* [prince] Saradar Singhji's [as in line 9 above]

20. notification, and that [*titha*], dated *sud* 3, *Bhaduwa,* VS 1852/CE 1795 [Maharaja Surat Singhji's reign];

-*Gaon* Rasisar, residents are Taladiya, the land [measuring] *bigha*

21. 1305, and [*titha*], *gaon* jangale's land [measuring] *bigha* 1295, and, *gaon* Parve's land *bigha* 1400, all together land [*sarab dharati*]

22. *bigha* 4000 [in words four thousand] and *dori* [a measurement of land] 20;- all combined were bestowed as *sasan*[25] to Shri[26] Jaipuria Sukhram s/o Balu

23. were bestowed as *sasan* [charitable *betalab* or non taxable *patta*] that [land] Sukharam had gifted [these] to his son grandsons' name and they received the related benefits;

24. [however] in the year VS 1856/A.D. 1799 [Maharaja Surat Singhji's reign] those [benefits? or lands] were not received. My [petitioner's, name not known] grandson was born. [I request to] *Shriji*[27] [Maharaja Ratan Singhji]

25. *saheban's* [=Sirs etc.] and Munsi Ladu Shri Kishan's kindness that when this *gaon* Rasisar was gifted,

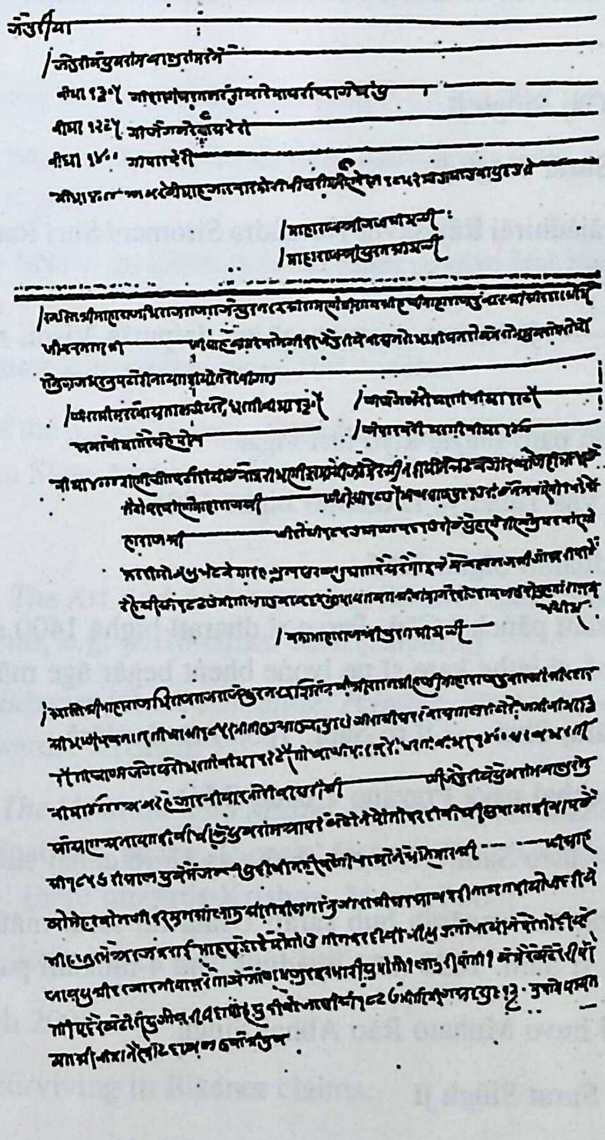
26. we petitioned to Shri *Hajur* that the land was [already] divided in 3 shares [by the court?] within my grandsons, those shares of brothers [who died] is to given to the grandsons [the]

27. petition was justified/approved by *Shri Darabar* that from the treasury we receive [in the following manners]: [1] grand daughter [*poti*] 1 grand daughter of Ladu [?], [2] grand daughter 1 grand daughter of Khem's son, [3] grand daughter

28. 1 grand daughter Pada's son[28] - all of the yielding [?] of the village. [This document was] *dakhal* [registered] on *Sud* 13, *Migasar,* VS 1897/A.D. 1840 [reign of Maharaja Ratan Singhji] in the Bikaner Court for the knowledge of *Shri* [*Shri mukha,* here Maharaja Ratan Singhji, who ruled before Saradar Singhji].

It seems that Jaipuria artists at this point, e.g. Maharaj Kumar Sardar Singhji's time [prior to 1851 - his enthronement], not only begon to die without male issue [*la-aulad*] but their surviving girls also did not show interests in pursuing the practice of art crafts as observed in case of contemporary Matheran class of artists in Bikaner[29]. Intead the girls started fighting for their land and position.

As it appears from the lines 27-28 of this *bahī*, the later Jaipurias (from the main branch) had only girl issues in their main line [of *Gajdhar* Sukharam]. And these girls had to fight for their rights. Obviously, the position of Jaipurias became weaker. Above all, it was a golden chance for Ustas to overcome their low keyed position in Bikaner as well as to resurrect themselves in the royal court using all possible palace conspiracies. As result, an era of Jaipurias ended in the history of Bikaner art and crafts.



P.249 [facing], ***Bahi Parawana Saradaran,*** no.2/2, *Rampuria Record*, no.40, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

1. **Jaipuriā**
2. **Jaipurīye Sukhrām Bālurām re nai**
3. **Bīghā 1305 Gaṅ. Rāsīsar tāl rī iyaṅ re vās rī āge thī su**
4. **Bīghā 1295 Gaṅ. Jaigale re vās re sī**
5. **Bighā 1400 Gaṅ. parve rī**

----

6. Bighā 4000 akharaṅ Bīghā hajār chār dorī bīs rī Pravānā Saṁ. 1852 mī. su Chāduvā sud 3 ro

----

7. ñ/Mahārājā Shrī Gaj Siṅgh jī
8. /ñ Mahārāj Shrī Surat Siṅgh jī
9. Svasti Shrī Mahārājādhirāj Rājeshvur Nareṅdra Siromanī Shrī Ratan Sīh jī Mahārāj Kuṅvar Shrī Saradār Siṅgh
10. jī vachanāt Shrī ------ jī sahban mervānagī kar Jaipuriā Visun ro Kisan ro Kheṁ Rāme Sukhrāme ro pote
11. (te) nu Gajadhar nu pato ināyat kiyo terī vigat

12 ñ/Gāṅ. Rāsīsar re vās Tāladiye rī dharatī bighā 1305

/ñ Gāṅ. Jegale rī dharatī bīghā 1295

13. akhare bīghā tere sāhī pāṅch / Gāṅ. Parve rī dharatī bīghā 1400 iṇī bhāṅt Pato dīyo chhai chākarī ghaṇī farmā sī jathe kare sī ne iyoṅe bheṅt begār āge māf chhai

15. tero Parvāṇo Mahāraj Shrī ---- jī ro Saṁ. 1835 mī. Sardārā

Asāḍha Sud 13 ro chhai navā Pravāno 1 bade (Mo)

16. (Mo) hārāj Shri ---- jī ro Saṁ. 1856 mī. Jeṭha as 13 ro chhai su inā nu Parvāno
17. kar diyo chhai su bheṅta vegārāh hub sarab Usatā rai sarai māfak chhai khechal ne usī Gāoṅ rī pithā rahai si Saṁ. 1823 mītī Bhāduvā Vad 4 mukām pāya takhat Shrī

Bikaner kota dākhil huvo Muhato Rāo Abhai Singh

18. Bado Mahāraj Shrī Surat Siṅgh jī
19. Svasti Shrī maharājādhirāj Rājrājeshvur Nareṅdrashiromanī

Shrī Ratan Siṅgh Shrī Maharāj Kuṅvāu Shrī Siradār

20. Siṅgh jī vachanāt tīthā Saṁ. 1852. mītī Bhāduvā Sud 3
    Gāṅ. Rāsīsar re vās Talriye rī jamī bīghā 13 (05)

21. (13) 05 tīthā Gāoṅ jāgele ri dharati bighā 1295 tīthā Gāoṅ Pārve rī dharatī bīghā 1400 sarab dharatī

22. bīghā 4000 akhare hazār chiyār dorī bīs rī Shrī Jaipurīye Sukharām Bālū re nu

23. sāsan anāyata kīvī thī su Sukhrām āp re beto ne poto karā dīvī chhai sū pāya kiyā chhai

24. Saṁ. 1856 rī sāl sukhe majalas rī su dīvī naḥī poto bhayo ne so hamār Shrī ---- jī sāhabān

25. (sāh) bān meharbānegī ar Munasī Lādu Sirī Kisan re nu Gāṅ. Rāsīsar māfak ināyat kīyo jad iye

26. Shrī Hajur mai araj karāyī mahār dode poto 3 tin kar dīvī thī su futo bhayo ne poto diyo

27. jāve su Shrī Darbār i niyāy rai tao khajāne maṅjūr kar mayi su potī 1 Ladu (? jhu) rī potī 1 khem re beto ri potī

28. (po) tī 1 pade re beto ri su Gāoṅ rī paidā mahī su diyo jāsī Saṁ. 1897. mītī Mīgasar Sud 13 mukām pāya

29. takhat Shrī Bīkāner kota dākhal huvo Shrī mukha.

Transliteration of the p.249 [facing], ***Bahi Parawana Saradaran,*** no.2/2, *Rampuria Record,* no.40, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

FOOT-NOTES

1. Herman Goetz, *The Art And Architecture of Bikaner State,* Oxford, 1950, mentions some names of Jaipurias, e.g. p.118-Ghazi Ram [Jaipuria]

2. Naval Krishan, *Bikaner [Court Miniature] Painting,* Ph. D. Theris [Unpublished], Varanasi, 1985. (here onwards: Krishan: Ph. D. 1985.

   Naval Krishan, *The Umarani Usta Master-Painters of Bikaner and Their Genealogy,* **Court Painting in Rajasthan, Marg,** [Special Issue], [Ed.] Andrew Topsfield, Bombay, March 2000, pp.57-64. [here onwards-Krishna: March 2000]

3. *vide:* translated lines 4-6 of the grant leaf.

4. -Krishna: March 2000.

5. As one family surviving in Bikaner claims.

   - At any rate the Jaipurias did not enter Bikaner court until late 17th century, as they are absent in the lists of painters' names among the *bijai karigar* [other artists] in the *Sambhala* Bahi. *Vide:*

-Naval Krishna *Painting and Painters in Bikaner: Notes on an Inventory Register of the 17th Century,* **Indian Painting - Essay in Honour of Karl J. Khandalawala,** [Ed.] B.N. Goswamy, with Association with Usha Bhatia, **Lalit Kala,** India, 1995, pp. 254-278. [here onwards: Krishna: 1995].

6. The trend however was devastating.

- Krishna: Ph. D. 1985.

7. Krishna: Ph. D.1985.

8. Naval Krishna, *Bikaner Miniature Painting Workshops of Ruknuddin, Ibrahim and Natthu,* **Lalit lala** no. 21, Edited by Karl J. Khandalawals, Bombay, 1985, pp.23-27. [here onwards: Krishna: KJK 1985]

9. *Kamathane ki Bahi,* VS 1829 [documenting palace construction works] and others, Rampuria Records, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

- see line 11 of the plate.

-Krishna: KJK 1985

-Many inscribed *nazar* [*vide:* Krishna: March 2000] paintings depicting Gaṇeśa and Mahālakṣmī painted by Jaipurias are available to us. However not many compositional paintings by them are available. It is possible that in the later periods the rival painters destroyed their paintings, or because most of their paintings were in the 20th century eyes considered as sub-standard, they were not preserved carefully and hence not survived to us. In contrast, those of Gaṇeśa and Lakṣmī, being the figures of deities, most of the time were worshipped and kept in home shrines until recently by the commoners or even antique dealers.

10. The author during his survey in Bikaner was astonished to find that no one from the families of Jaipuria artists presently live in Bikaner, save one, in contrast to several Ustas who are still maintaining the old *Uston ka Muhalla* [colony of Ustas]

-Interestingly, many Ustas now a days do not pursue their conventional profession related to art and crafts. Nevertheless, they did not leave their ancestor's properties in the *Uston ka Muhalla* and do other jobs. In contrast, in the later part of the 19th century, to the Jaipurias' descendants for many reasons the environment of the Bikaner did not suit, and as a result, they were compelled to sell out their properties and left the city.

- Krishna: Ph. D. 1985.

11. The first available Bikaneri *patta bahi* [land-grant register] dating the reigns of Raja Sur Singh [r. 1614-31], in a form of its later copy, is available to us. Since then until the merger of the states in an united India, this tradition continued. These enlist the names of nobles

and others important people [including other professional classes] who received land grants time to time from the royal court. [Krishna: Ph. D. 1985]

- Naval Krishna, *Bikaner Artists And A Sardar Bahi of Land Grant;* **Pathways to Literature, Art and Archaeology** [Felicitation Volume in Honour of Pt. G.N. Bahura], [Ed.] Chandramani Singh and Neelima Vashishtha, Jaipur, 1991, pp.155-161. [here onwards: Krishna: 1991]

12. Maharaja Gaj Singhji [r.1745-87], Maharaja Raj Singhji [1787], Maharaja Pratap Singhji [1787], Maharaja Surat Singhji [referred as *Bada* Maharaja] [r.1787-1828], Maharaja Ratan Singhji [r.1828-51], Maharaj Kunwar and Maharaja Saradar Singhji [1851-87].

- Maharaj Kunwar Sardar Singhji more than once is mentioned here as a prince [lines 9, 19-20 of the plate]. It seems that he already had received the *Kunwarpad* [princehood] title and began to observe closely the court activities. As a result, he was entitled to be in the official list or when necessary, to bestow grants in life time of his predecessor Ratan Singhji [whose good will with British brought him an exuberant title-*Maharajadhiraj Rajeshwar Narendrashiromani* [lines 9, 19]].

- Two successors of Maharaja Gaj Singh Ji [r.1745-87]: Maharajas Raj Singh ji and Pratap Singhji died in the same year, e.g. A.D. 1787. As the result, they did not have time to bestow any grant.

13. The practice as observed in these cases, that none *patta parwana* was released just after the Maharajas' enthronement, that two Maharajas - Raj Singh ji and Pratap Singhji [the successors of Maharaja Gaj Singhji] could not cross one year of their rule and thus they failed to bestow any grant [as above]. obviously first few months always were used by Maharajas to get all inventories and the reshuffling of the officials of the palaces.

14. Author's note: because such noting have been written in some kind of codified language, much of the words in the text were not understood by the common people of the time. Presently, I include those missing words in [ ] while { } is being used for the original text used by the grant scribe.

- Similarly, line numbering have been given by the author for the convenience of the readers, they are not originally in the *bahi*.

15. Both the Father and Son appear to be top Jaipurias, as their names appear a lot in various *bahis* documenting different projects of Bikaner royal court.

Krishna: Ph. D. 1985-8 Appendix 2.d List of Gajdhar Artists:

3. VS 1810.1753

Jaipuria Mohan son of Harji [under the supervision of Usta Ahmad son of Gulab [incharge of *Bada karkahana*]

4. Vs 1812/1755

Jaipuria Sukhram son of Balu [received Rs. 20 as dis Jaipuria Mohan son of Hariji] - incharge as on the top of the list

5. VS 1816-17/1759-60

Jaipuria Sukhram son of Balu [Rs. 20]

9. VS 1823/1766

Gajdhar Jaipuria Sukhram son of Balu [Rs. 20]

11. VS 1829/1772

Gajdhar Sukhram Jaipuria

From this point Jaipurias were mentioned distinctly as Gajadhar alongwith the Ustas

12. VS 1830/1773

Gajdhar Usta Sukhram Jaipuria

13. VS 1832-33/1775-76

Gajdhar Usta Sukhram Jaipuria Usta Ahmad son of Abu [incharge]

14. VS 1875-ca. 1900/1818-1843

many Gajdhars and Jaipurias begun to loose their status

16. Rasisar [a village] appears to be an important [not only is close to Bikaner city, but also falls in the trade rout directly connected with Bikaner] village. This *bahi* evinces that some *gaons* of which were earlier given to the Ustas [Krishna: 1991]. Presently, perhaps other parts [or already transferred from the Ustas to these communities] were transferred to Jaipurias from different communities.

17. The word *poto* in the *bahi* terminology does not mean just 'grandson' but it is a symbolic term for direct descendants.

18. *Gajdhar* - [lit.] who holds the stick [*gaja*] or *Sutradhara* as mentioned in Temple architectural terms. However, here in Bikaner it denotes - the head of the atelier. See for detail

- Krishna: KJK 1985.

- the *gaons* or lands listed here were transferred [*tagir*] to Jaipurias from other communities [as above].

19. The *chakari* [service] is also clarified in various relevant places in the *bahi* [while discussing other professional class], see

- Krishna: March 2000, end note 4.

- They have to present themselves time to time at the court with various excuses - most notable was offering *Nazar,* see

- Naval Krishna, *Bikaneri Nazar Paintings Depicting Krishna and Other Court Activities,* **chachaji,** Prof Walter Spink Felicitation Volume], ***Ars Orientalis-Suppliment-1,*** [Guest Ed.] Stephen A. Markel, USA, 2000, pp.93-94. [here onwards: Krishna: AO-2000].

20. Similar facilities were given to Ustas all the way from Maharaja Anup Singh ji's time [r.1669-98] in late 17th century, *vide:*

- Krishna: AO-2000; Krishna: Ph.D. 1985 and Krishna: March 2000.

21. Because once a name appear in the beginning, the scribe would obviously not write the short form of the name which was sufficient for other. Here *Shriji* means: Honorable Sir or Maharaja.

- *ibid.*

22. In *bahis,* a *patta* is referred to the land grant and a *parwana* means the court order.

23. Same situation arises as occurs in referring *Bada* [or *bado*] maharaja, which means the father of the reigning maharaja. For more, see line 18 in the plate.

- Ibid.

24. Because it is a legal document, the scribe is repeating all the details on and on and point to point [in contrast to not repeating the patrons' names, above end note-23] to confirm the amount of lands and the recipients.

25. 'charity'

26. Even the court had honoured this Jaipuria by giving him a suffix - *Shri* [=Mr.].

27. Similar abbreviations have been used in lines 10, 15, 16, and 24 of the plate, e.g. see end notes 21-22.

28. None of these names sound important in terms of the art activities in Bikaner, nor their names appear in *bahis*.

29. Krishna: Ph. D. 1985.

Book-Review

***Gaṇeśa in Indian Art and Literature,** Dr. (Smt.) Nirmala Yadav, Publication Scheme, Jaipur, 1997, Text Pates 372, Illustrations 189, Price Rs. 2000/-.*

Gaṇeśa, the bestower of success and remover of obstacles, has been one of the most venerated Indian Gods who not only figures as one of the five principal deities of *Pañcāyatana* worship of Brahmanical tradition but also occupies an exalted position in Jaina and Buddhist pantheons. Gaṇeśa thus truly becomes a pan-Indian, rather an Asian God and hence the study of Gaṇeśa from different view-points have attracted the scholars from the beginning of the 20th century. The present book is a significant addition to the studies on Gaṇeśa, particularly in reference to the visual representations of Gaṇeśa from the earliest times to the 12th century A.D. The work presents an exhaustive study particularly of the stone sculptures in terms of iconography alongwith adequate references to the Vedic, Purāṇic literature and iconographic texts. It is satisfying to find that the present study on Gaṇeśa is not confined to Brahmanical art only but it does make study of Gaṇeśa in Buddhist and Jaina art as well. Since the present book is an outcome of the Ph.D. thesis of Dr. Yadav, some of the limitations of the author could be understood. It would have been better to divide the forms of Gaṇeśa, on the basis of the iconographic forms like *Ekal* Gaṇeśa, Śakti Gaṇeśa, Nṛtta Gaṇeśa, Heramba Gaṇeśa etc., than as seated, standing or Dancing images. This would have made the present study more useful and development oriented.

The present book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter entitled Ganesis and Mythology aptly deals with the concept and origin of Gaṇeśa and also various factors responsible for the inclusion of different iconographic features mainly on the basis of the Vedic and Puranic literature. The second chapter is devoted to the iconographic features of Gaṇeśa as found in various Purāṇas, Āgamas and *Śilpa* texts. The chapter makes a comprehensive and discriptive study but it would have been better if the references could have been arranged and studied with a view to suggest the gradual evolution of the iconographic forms and features of Gaṇeśa with the reasons thereof. Undoubtedly the material collected and presented in a chaste way is highly useful.

The next three chapters dealing respectively with Gaṇeśa in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina art form the core of the book wherein Dr. Yadav has made a descriptive approach and has adequately used the published books and articles, and more the archival collections of American Institute of Indian Studies, Grugaon which have enhanced the value of of the book. But the study fails to give the variety of forms and evolution at some of the most prolific sites like Khajurāho, Ellorā, Osiāñ, Bhubaneshwar to the desired extent.

The third chapter on Gaṇeśa in Brahmanical art (pp.32-173) makes the most detailed study of seated, standing and dancing images of Gaṇeśa alongwith the images of Śakti Gaṇeśa. The other aspects discussed in third chapter is Vināyakī which has wrongly been described as female Gaṇeśa (see p.146 - "The only difference is that here Gaṇeśa is depicted in the female form". The Chapter also includes the renderings of Gaṇeśa with Śiva, Pārvatī, Kārttikeya, Saptamātrikā, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and other Deities as *Pārśva* or *Parivāra devatā.* While discussing the figures of Gaṇeśa from different states the discussion sometimes does not go in chronological sequence which makes it difficult to streamline the developmental elements and the regional features.

Some of the important forms of Gaṇeśa like Heramba and Ucchiṣṭa are not discussed properly in the book. The representation of Gaṇeśa as one of the members of *Pañcāyatana* worship and also on *Devapaṭṭas* should have rather gone in the appendix; because they are different in context. I also suggest that in the next addition item six of the third chapter (Gaṇeśa in Association with other Deities) should be termed as Gaṇeśa as Pārśva and Parivāra Devatā. The association of some of the attributes of Śiva like *paraśu, sarpa* or even trident with Gaṇeśa and Gaṇeśa also as having five-faces, third eyes and shown as dancing like Śiva are some of the important points on which Dr. Yadav should have given her observations. Such analytical observations would further enhance the merit of the book.

The sixth chapter is the conclusion which makes an overview of the entire study with some general observations. A little discussion on the placement of the Gaṇeśa figures on Indian temples could have made the work more relevant and contextual.

The Glossary of terms and Passages from the original texts on the iconographic features of Gaṇeśa (pp.214-253) are very important and useful for the readers and researchers. The bibliography and index are fairly exhaustive and authentic which add to the value of the book. Most important are 189 good illustrations which provide a detailed pictorial reference to Gaṇeśa images.

The language is chaste and the diacritical marks are correctly done. The publication also is of good standard which makes the book presentable and readable. The book is certainly an important addition to the field of Indian Iconography in general and the Iconography of Gaṇeśa in particular for which Dr. Yadav deserves our applause.

Dr. Maruti Nandan Tiwari

Book-Review

Sri Aurobindo on Indian Art : Selections from his Writings. Photographs and Text (besides excerpts) by Elisabeth Beck. Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 1999 Pages 228 B/w illustrations 151 Price not stated.

Sri Aurobindo is better known to the world and Indian masses as a sage, a spiritualist, who established an *āshram* at Pondicherry in South India. This is only one aspect of his multi-faceted personality. Not very many Indians - the art historians being an exception - are aware of his tremendous contribution to a rare insight into and understanding of traditional Indian art, culture, thought, philosophy, *et al.* In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Mother India found Her best exponent and spokesman in this truly great son of hers. He fought relentlessly for the Hindu cause - which these days is unfortunately and wrongly termed as "saffronising" by political upstarts and opportunists - and was the first to place the Hindu art and culture on the world map in those early times, when the British rule was at its acme, and the British saw nothing glorious in our art and culture. Most of his ideas found their supporters in his contemporaries like E.B. Havell and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. In fact, Coomāraswamy ranks at par with Sri Aurobindo as far as their encyclopaedic knowledge of Hindu religion, philosophy. polity, literature, spirituality, besides the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture, are concerned.

Sri Aurobindo was inspired, nay roused, to write an important *albeit* slim book entitled "The Significance of Indian Art", and subsequently his well known "The Foundations of Indian Culture" by the vitriolic outpourings of the British drama critic William Archer in his publication India and the Future printed in England in 1917. Aurobindo's essays on Indian art, sculpture and architecture, excerpted from the Foundations... were a befitting retort to Archer and his ilk, whose minds were steeped knee-deep in racial prejudices and discrimination against India, the country governed by their brethren. The situation today has changed to a large extent, and more and more westerners are waking upto the beauties and superiority of Indian art and culture, to the tremendous achievements made thousands of years ago by our *Ṛṣis* in all the fields of human knowledge. What Sri Aurobindo has said in these essays is an expression of the boldness of his thoughts, his convictions that still hold good.

The seer was eminently equipped for the task he had taken upon himself. He was fully conversant with western art, culture, thought, civilisation, having studied in England, and was not ignorant about his own civilisation. The amazing intellectual prowess displayed by him in his retaliation of Archer's criticism point by point informs us about his deep roots in his soil. First he discusses the sources of Archer's/misunderstandings, and then goes onto a discussion of the cultural significance of Indian aesthetic vision and creation.

The text comprises excerpts from The Foundations of Indian Culture, and resolves itself into six chapters - three devoted to a general discussion of Indian art, and the last three to art in general, architecture and sculpture. All these are followed by references. Countless admirers of Sri Aurobindo must have read his original work many years ago. What prompted Elisabeth Beck to work on this book were her excellent photographs, most of the sculptures embellishing the Indian temples, but also of the temple structures from all over the country. Each photograph is accompanied by an appropriate illustration and suitable excerpt from the author's book, that drives home the point. His penetrating, pithy and precise observations on the significance and profound symbolic content of Indian temple architecture merit attention. Not even Stella Kramrisch who produced two voluminous tomes on Hindu Temple, nor our great art historian Ananda K. Coomaraswamy spelt everything with the same clarity as displayed by this remarkable *Ṛṣi* who depended only on his spiritual intuition for penning and recording his views. Sri Aurobindo did not limit himself to the Hindu temples alone. His equally sharp observations on the Mughal monuments that encompass the Taj Mahal, the Fatehpur Sikri and all the principal buildings erected by Humayun and his descendants show that he was not impervious to their secret beauties, their architectural essence. One should read the text along with the marvellous monochrome photograhs taken by Elisabeth Beck in order to really understand their true worth. The same is true of what Sri Aurobindo has written on Indian sculpture. Nothing escapes his probing eye. If the quality of carving is sub-standard, inferior, he has the boldness to point it out. He possessed the real qualities of an excellent critic to view art objects with an impartial eye and mind and point our both their merits and demerits.

Besides being an excellent photographer, Elisabeth Beck has displayed a rare ability to synchronise the most apt passages or excerpts with illustrations that contain those very qualities. This difficult task has been accomplished with remarkable dexterity and understanding by her. Thanks to her and the publishers for excellent printing quality, consistently maintained by Mapin Publishing Co. all through their books. The layouts by Dolly Sahiar are superb; in fact she does not need an introduction, so well-known that she is.

Dr. Subhashini Aryan

Book-Review

Manuscript Paintings of Assam State Museum *(A Catalogue)* **by R.D. Choudhury and Choodamani Nandagopal, Pp xx + 130; 40 col. plates Directorate of Museums, Assam, Guwahati, 1998**

Assam had an old and thriving manuscript tradition with the locally available *sanchipat* as the basic writing material. With the dramatic rise of Vaishnavism under Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva in the early 16th century this got a fresh impetus. The earliest reference to manuscript painting is also associated with this saint, but no example of this period has yet been found. The early date of *Chitra-Bhagavata* (1461 Saka/1539) in the Bali-Satra, Nagaon has not been relied upon, as stylistically the paintings of this work appear to be closer to the late 17th century works. Artists were brought from outside by King Pratap Singh in the early 17th century, but it was only from the later part of that century that we find a large number of paintings of very high quality being produced in different centers of Assam. The royal court was actively patronizing literature and art and the manuscripts produced in the court was actively patronizing literature and art and the manuscripts produced in the court ateliers invariably contained a large number of illustrations painted by painters of good caliber. The *satras* continued to play their role as important centers of art activity as the religious manuscripts commissioned by rich devotees or the heads of these establishments, who were very often learned and accomplished, contained paintings of a different but equally interesting style. The manuscripts of this period sometimes contained more than four hundred paintings, complete with date of completion and the names of the painters and the patron.

In spite of such abundance of materials and important and reliable information these treasures of Indian miniature painting tradition have remained virtually unknown and unnoticed. The reasons are not far to seek: barring a few examples in the British Library most of the Assamese illustrated manuscripts are preserved in various public, private collections and religious establishments within the state. Their value as objects of art and as evidence of Assamese art and culture have not been properly realized. Most of them have not been documented or freely accessible and no concerted effort to prepare a survey of these treasures has yet been made. Only a few of these have been exhibited outside the state or published in books or catalogues of Indian painting.

The publication of R.D. Choudhury and Choodamani Nandagopal's slim volume, *Manuscript Paintings of Assam State Museum*, is therefore a major step in this direction. It would help the students of Indian art history to get a good glimpse of the treasures that were unknown to them and to get some idea about the richness and variety of Assamese painting of its golden age.

The book opens with a brief but highly informative Foreword written by the leading scholar of Assamese studies, Naren Kalita. He has mentioned about the origin and growth of the *satra* tradition initiated by Sankaradeva, and the glorious court tradition of the Ahom and Koch kings and how in the beginning of the 18th century these two traditions fused together for some time. Unfortunately Dr. Kalita's text is too brief, and how one wishes to see some representative illustrations of the manuscripts referred by him, specially that of the *Chitra-Bhagavata* or the work of the painter Purnakama in the *Adhyatma-Ramayana* (1767) or the highly lauded single illustration of the *Rangali-Kirtana* (1759) or a scene from the *Parijata-Harana* (1836) painted by Sasadhar Ata! But we should not complain as Dr. Kalita was only writing a brief Foreword, we mentioned this as it occurred spontaneously to us.

In the Preface the learned authors provide a very brief account of writings in English and Assamese on Assamese painting. Two pioneering articles by L.D. Barnett ('Two illustrated Assamese manuscripts', *British Museum Quarterly,* VIII, 1933, 10-12) and G.E. Marrison ('*Kirtana-Ghosha*- an illustrated Assamese manuscript', *British Museum Quarterly,* XXXIII, 1969, 108-10) have unfortunately been left out. This is followed by an outline of their task The next chapter deals with a short note on the Indian manuscript tradition. A detailed account of the Eastern Indian miniature tradition would have been more appropriate in the context.

The main body of the text deals with five very important and interesting illustrated manuscripts on different subjects in the collection of the Assam State Museum, Guwahati. These are the *Sundarakanda* chapter of the *Ramayana* containing 162 illustrations, of which eight have been reproduced in colour; the *Graha-Gajendra Upakhyana* of *Bhagavata* (canto VIII) containing 67 illustrations of which seven are included here in colour; *Syamantra-harana* with 52 illustrations of which nine are reproduced in colour; *Anadi-Patan* with 50 illustrations, eight reproduced in colour; an incomplete text of *kirtan* of six leaves containing 11 miniatures six of which are reproduced in colour, and another *kirtan* manuscript of a later date containing 16 illustrations, two reproduced here in colour. For each manuscript there is a brief note on its content and style followed by a complete list and identity of the illustrations. The book is conceived as a museum catalogue and the authors have chosen to leave it as such.

As a sourcebook of Assamese manuscript painting this volume should be considered as a pathbreaker. We would look forward for similar or more detailed catalogues on other public and private collections spread out throughout the State containing similar manuscripts representing this richly endowed school of Indian painting. An exhibition of Assamese painting consisting of representative examples from each period and style and sub-styles with a well-researched and informative catalogue with proper illustrations should also be organized in the near future to highlight this important chapter of Indian painting tradition. With one of the authors occupying the highest position in the museum field this should be a distinct possibility.

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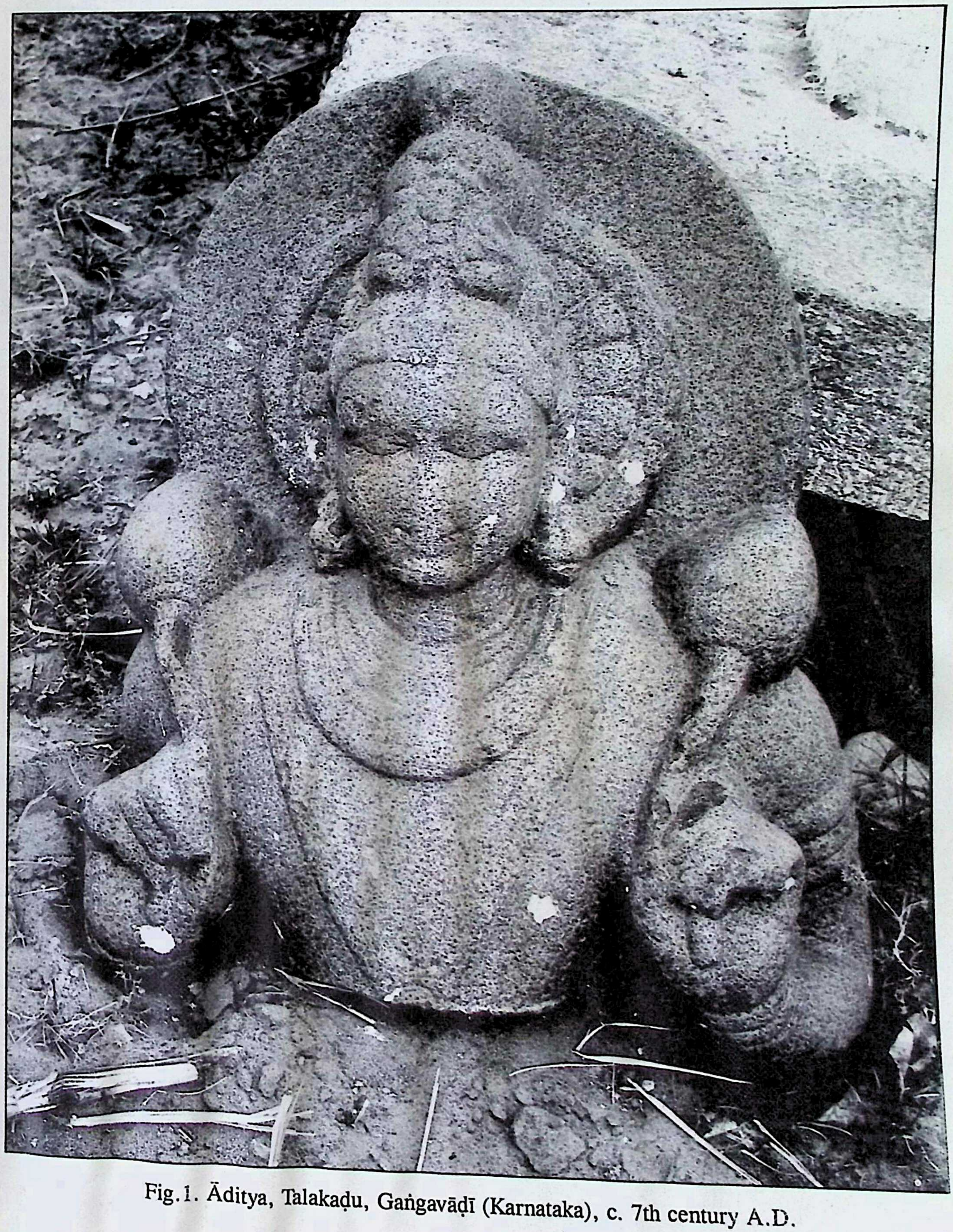

Fig. 1. Āditya, Talakaḍu, Gaṅgavāḍī (Karnataka), c. 7th century A.D.

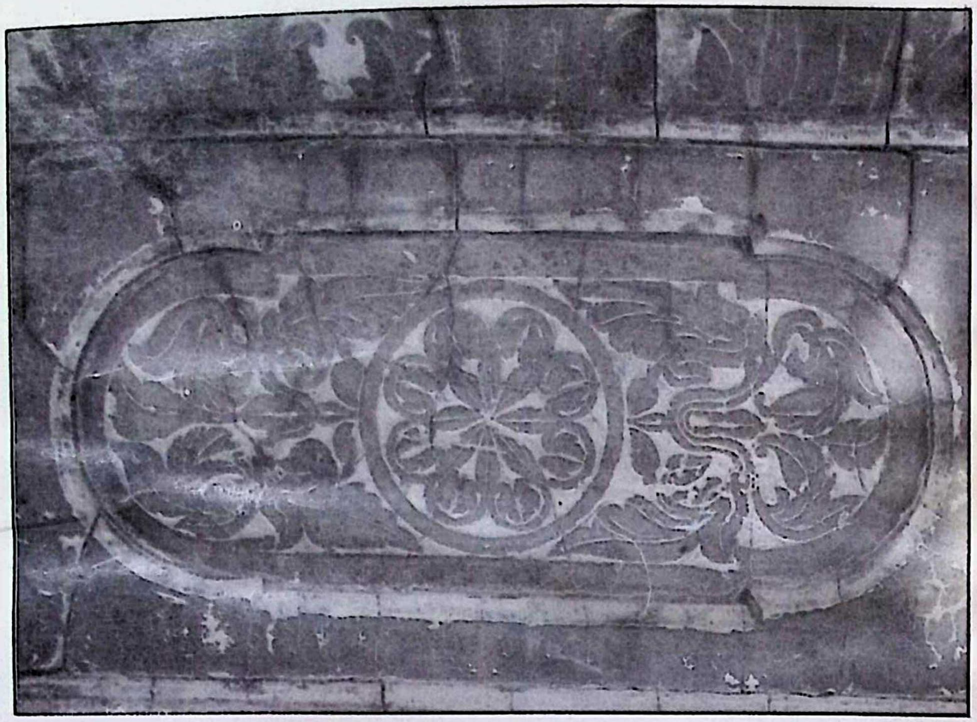

Fig.39. A decorative motif sgraffito, *hiraunjī* on quicklime base, dated 1900.

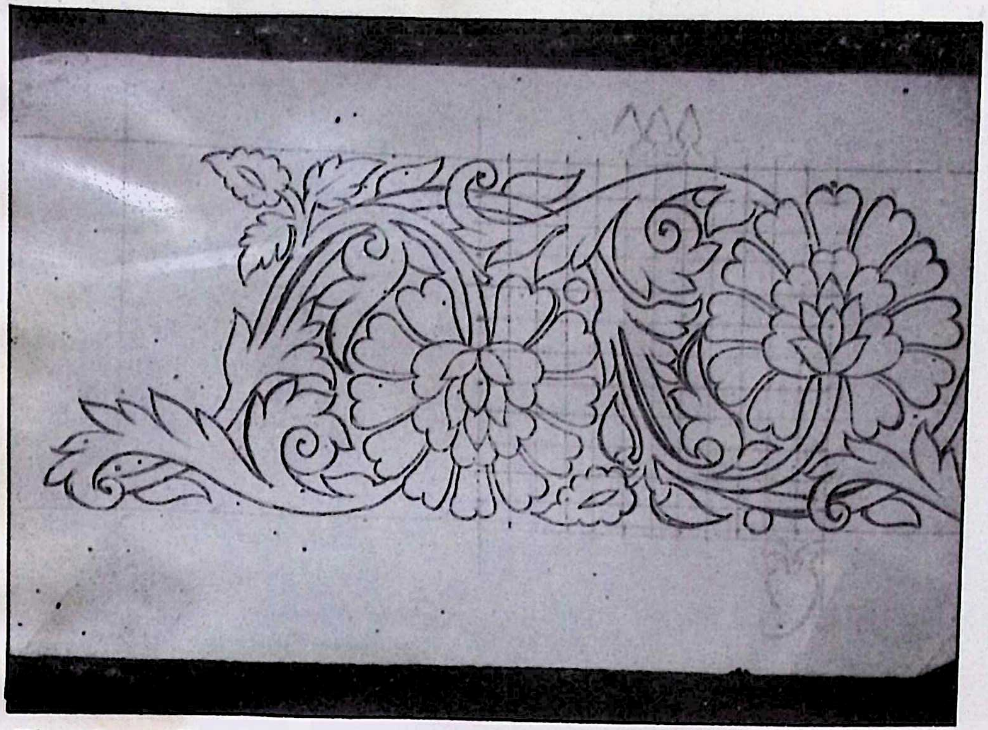

Fig.40. A floral meander for a border, *syāh kalam* on paer, c. 1900.

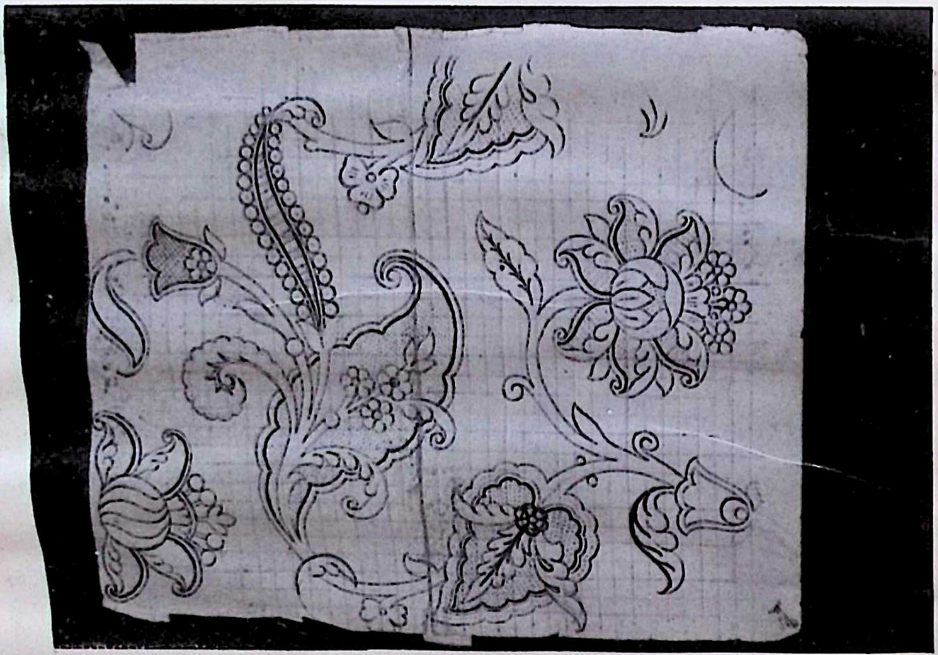

Fig.41. An all-over floral design or *janglā*, *syāh kalam* on paper, c. 1920.

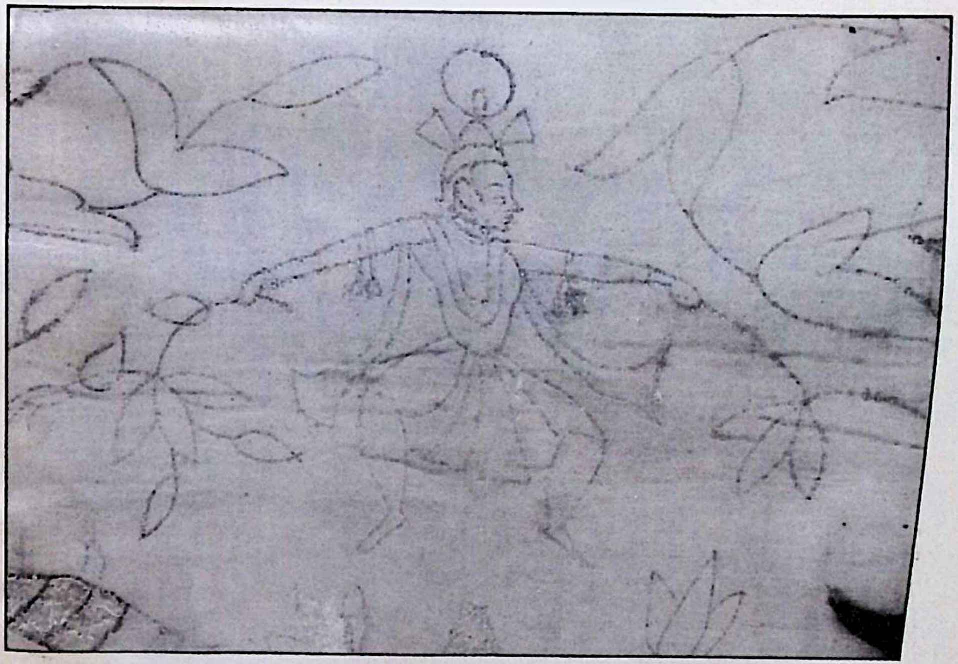

Fig.42. The dancing Kṛṣna, line drawing in red ochre on muslin, detail from a Chamba *rūmāl*, c. 1850.

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and SUNDEEP PRAKASHAN, NEW DELHI.